

# FINANCIAL TIMES

EUROPE'S BUSINESS NEWSPAPER

Friday August 28 1987

Commerce not made  
welcome at  
the bank, Page 16

No. 30,323

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## World News Business Summary

### Spain orders strikers to ease flights chaos

Spanish authorities ordered Barcelona air traffic controllers to ease a 24-hour strike tomorrow to avoid a repeat of airport chaos that affected thousands of holidaymakers this week.

A Civil Aviation spokeswoman said controllers would be required to handle all international charter flights and open one more route between Barcelona and the Balearic Islands.

Controllers were due to meet last night and today to decide whether they would accept the mandatory expansion of services.

**Progress on arms ban**  
Diplomatic experts in Geneva reported substantial progress in drafting a global convention to ban chemical weapons, due mainly to acceptance of compulsory inspections by the Soviet Union.

**Pakistan violence**  
At least 28 people were killed as ethnic violence between Pakistan's Mohajir and Pashtun communities spread from Karachi to Hyderabad. Troops imposed curfews on the two cities.

**Poindexter to retire**  
Rear Admiral John P. Poindexter, the former national security adviser who resigned after the Iran-Contra scandal broke, has submitted a request to retire from the Navy this autumn. Pentagon officials said yesterday.

**Shuttle test fails**  
A critical first full-scale test of a redesigned US space shuttle rocket was aborted yesterday with less than 20 seconds to go before the firing was to begin.

**New Japanese rocket**  
Japan used a new, powerful, three-stage rocket to place an experimental, multi-purpose satellite in orbit.

**Strike leaders seized**  
Police began arresting leftist organisers of the Philippines transport strike as support for the strike waned and union leaders returned to the streets.

**Chinese currency curb**  
China put into effect tough new regulations aimed at tightening control of its foreign debt, with strict penalties for those who kept unauthorised bank accounts abroad.

**Peruvian demo**  
Several people were injured and 20 arrested when demonstrators fought in the main square of Arequipa, Peru's second city, as government plans to nationalise private banks were denounced at a rally attended by tens of thousands.

**Imperial Palace attack**  
At least five home-made rockets were fired into the grounds of the Japanese Imperial Palace in Tokyo from the back of a parked truck but no one was hurt. Police blamed left-wing radicals.

**Soviet AIDS tests**  
One million people had been tested for AIDS in the Soviet Union and 102 carriers of the virus detected - including 80 for children - a health official said.

**Tunisia trial adjourned**  
A group of 92 Islamic activists were accused of plotting to overthrow the Tunisian Government and planting bombs in tourist hotels when their trial opened and was adjourned in Tunis.

**Punjab killer shot**  
Punjab police shot dead the leader of a Sikh extremist gang believed to have killed six relatives of Indian Home Minister Biju Singh.

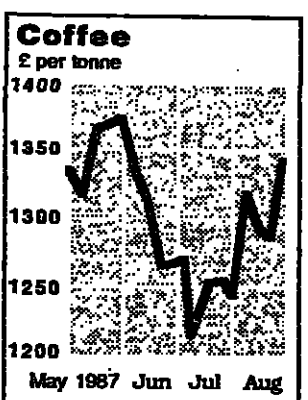
**Hacker phone cheats**  
Dutch computer hackers discovered a way of making international telephone calls at Spain's expense by cracking a code used by Telefonos, the state telephone company.

### US Lazard to launch \$2bn white knight fund

LAZARD FRERES, private New York investment banking firm, is to launch a \$2bn white knight fund for the defence of well-managed companies threatened by hostile takeover bids.

DAF TRUCKS of the Netherlands, in which the UK's state-owned Rover group has a 40 per cent shareholding, is to launch a range of heavy-duty "flagship" vehicles at the Frankfurt Motor Show next week, the culmination of a six-year programme which cost £1.600m (\$300m).

COFFEE prices on the London futures market continued to gain ground but the pace of the rise slowed. London's November



ber position added 28 to Wednesday's rise to reach a fresh 3-month high of £1,335.50 a tonne. Commodities, Page 24

ITALY's new Christian Democratic government pushed up domestic interest rates and unveiled an emergency tax package designed to cut consumer demand and put an end to speculation on a devaluation of the lira.

TOKYO: Chemicals and pharmaceuticals took the Nikkei average to a record in heavy volume. The index climbed 83.08 to 25,968.78 as investors sought stocks with lower foreign exchange risks.

LONDON: Equities succumbed to the overnight fall on Wall Street and moved quietly lower in a nervous trading. The market was also unsettled before next week's announcement of trade figures for July. The FT-SE index shed 3.8 at 2,945.8 and the FT Ordinary Index was down 3.1 at 1,758.1.

WALL STREET: The Dow Jones industrial average closed down 26.79 at 2,875.06.

GOLD fell in London to \$454.75 from \$457.75. It also fell in Zurich to \$456.00 from \$457.75.

DOLLAR closed in New York at DM1.8095, SF1.4885, Y141.75, and FF76.05. It fell in London to DM1.8130 (DM1.8250), SF1.4930 (SF1.5035), and FF76.05 (FF76.1055) and Y141.95 (Y143.05). On Bank of England figures, the dollar's exchange rate index fell from 101.6 to 101.1.

STERLING closed in New York at \$1.6630. It rose in London to \$1.6250 (\$1.6170) and DM2.5550 (DM2.5520), but was unchanged at SF2.4325, FF9.8675, and Y231.25. The pound's exchange rate index rose 0.3 to 72.3.

S.G. WARBURG Securities (Japan) contested the widely-held view that the Japanese stock market is highly overvalued based on price-earnings ratios.

EMS-CHEMIE Holding, Swiss chemical concern, is to propose a dividend increase and a double rights issue at its October 19 shareholders' meeting.

TOYOTA MOTOR reported unconsolidated pre-tax profits of ¥298.01bn in the year to June 30, 1987, down 18.5 per cent from the previous year. Net profits were 21.5 per cent lower to ¥200.21bn.

BOLIDEN, Swedish mining, metals, and chemicals group, has acquired the Spanish mining company Andaluza de Piritas from Banco Central, one of the leading Spanish commercial banks, for an undisclosed sum.

## Sweden launches Nobel Industries inquiry

BY KEVIN DONE, NORDIC CORRESPONDENT, IN STOCKHOLM

SWEDISH competition authorities are investigating Nobel Industries and its arms and explosives subsidiary, Bofors, over its commercial links with a group of European military explosives manufacturers because of alleged cartel activities.

The inquiry has been triggered by damaging evidence of widespread cartel operations in the European explosives industry, uncovered as part of the exhaustive investigation by Swedish customs agents into arms and explosives smuggling to the Middle East by Bofors.

Documents seized during raids on Bofors offices indicate that Nobelkrut, a division of Nobel Industries' chemicals and explosives sector, has operated as a "member of three different international explosives cartels", according to an official memorandum prepared by Sweden's Office of Competition Ombudsman (known as NO).

The memorandum says that

Documents indicate that Sir John Harvey-Jones, (right), ex-ICI chairman, took action to prohibit executives from its subsidiary, Nobel Explosive, from taking part in alleged cartel meetings



the European suppliers that were members of one or more of the cartels during the years 1981-85, the period covered by the Swedish customs investigation, include a subsidiary of ICI

and a state-owned French company, as well as Nobelkrut (Bofors) of Sweden. Others came from Belgium, Switzerland, Norway and Italy.

The French state-owned con-

cern, Societe Nationale des Poudres et Explosifs de France, declined to comment yesterday. ICI said its policy was that company employees should not be involved in any activity of this kind.

The NO documents and memorandum indicate that Sir John Harvey-Jones, former chairman of ICI, took action in 1984 to prohibit executives from Nobel Explosive Company, its wholly owned subsidiary, from any long-term taking part in meetings with members of the alleged cartels.

The Swedish customs investigation centred on the role of Bofors and other companies in supplying explosives to Iran, but according to the NO memorandum the seized documents also show that these companies were engaged in widespread cartel activities aimed at fixing prices, sharing orders and dividing up markets in Europe, Africa and Latin America.

The cartels allegedly oper-

ated sometimes behind the scenes of officially recognised trade associations - described by Bofors executives as "clubs" - formed to discuss safety and technical standards in the explosives industry, such as the European Association for the Study of Safety Problems in the Production and Use of Propellant Powders.

The seized documents are handwritten reports by Bofors sales and marketing executives of meetings of the clubs held in various European cities during the period 1981-85.

Now publicly available in Sweden, they show how the cartel members met to decide:

● which company should get new orders;

● that all orders over 10 tons should be a matter for consultation;

Leave Greece to the others, Page 14

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## Iran shows signs of flexibility toward UN resolution

By John Wyles in Rome and Our United Nations Correspondent

THE BRINKMANSHIP between Iran and Iraq over international efforts to end the Gulf war intensified yesterday as Iran gave further signs of flexibility in its approach to a United Nations resolution ordering a ceasefire, and Iraq renewed a threat to resume attacks on Iranian shipping.

Mr Giulio Andreotti, the Italian Foreign Minister, reported to other Cabinet Ministers after a meeting yesterday with Mr Mohammad Jawad Larjani, the Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister, that there had been some "favourable developments" over the last few days in diplomatic efforts to end the Gulf war.

An Italian Government statement revealed later that Mr Larjani had said that Tehran was "ready to co-operate fully in reducing tension while avoiding any act which compromises the de facto ceasefire" which now exists in the tanker war between Iran and Iraq.

However, Iraq yesterday gave a clear indication that this lull in attacks on Gulf shipping may not last much longer. The Iraqi delegate to the United Nations, Mr Ismat Kattan, told a press conference in New York that Baghdad reserved its right to continue the war by all possible means as long as Iran failed to comply with the UN Security Council's demand for a ceasefire and withdrawal of troops to international borders.

Mr Kattan said his government's assessment was that Iran was simply playing for time and had no intention of complying with the resolution. Any resumption of Iraqi attacks on Iranian shipping would almost certainly provoke Iranian retaliation, and an escalation of the Gulf war which may draw in foreign warships.

He urged the Security Council to begin immediate steps to enforce the resolution under the provisions of Chapter VII of the UN Charter. An international arms embargo was a first option, though it was for Security Council members to decide what measures they might take.

Security Council members met privately yesterday to review the two days of talks that many of them had with Mr Larjani. He had two long sessions with Mr Javier Perez de Cuellar, the UN Secretary General, but apparently without positive results. Mr Perez de Cuellar told a news conference that he expected to receive a formal reply next week to the Council's ceasefire resolution, but Saudi foreign policy, Page 3

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## Thousands dismissed as S African miners step up strike action

BY JIM JONES IN JOHANNESBURG

ANGLO AMERICAN, South Africa's biggest mining company and the most-affected by the industry's labour troubles, yesterday sacked 16,000 men following the decision by the National Union of Mine Workers (NUM) to continue its 16-day-old strike.

The sackings came at two collieries and two collieries, and another 2,500 men were threatened with dismissal by the weekend if they failed to return to work today. An NUM spokesman said the dismissals and employment of non-union labour are designed to break the union. Anglo strongly denies this, saying that there are no restrictions on new employees joining the union or on union organisers recruiting new members.

A further 15,000 men at the vast Reef and Free State Gold mines were given ultimatums to return to work or face dismissal. Meanwhile, about 3,000 men yesterday protested against the

dismissals by staging an underground sit-in at Western Deep Levels, the world's deepest gold mine. Management said the sit-in was confusing the pay-off of strikers who had refused to return to work.

The Government has meticulously avoided involvement in the strike, saying it is an issue to be resolved by the union and mineowners. However, Mr Piet Dierckx, the Minister of Manpower, said on Wednesday that the Government was considering legislation designed to "modernise" dispute-settling channels between workers and management.

Striking miners voted virtually unanimously on Wednesday to reject improved fringe benefits offered by the Chamber of Mines. The NUM reduced its demand for pay increases to 27 per cent from 30 per cent and repeated that it was prepared to take the dispute to arbitration and mediation.

The Chamber was unwilling

to discuss wage increases beyond those of between 17 and 23.4 per cent unilaterally imposed on July 1. A spokesman said the Chamber had made it "abundantly clear before and during this week's negotiations that improvements offered would not include further wage increases."

Wednesday's vote has attracted additional support for the strike at some mines. Gencor, the second-largest of the mining houses, reports that only 60 per cent of employees reported for work at the Bracken gold mine yesterday. On Wednesday 95 per cent of the men were at work.

Gencor's strategy differs from Anglo's and seems to indicate differences within the Chamber on how to handle the strike. Managers of Gencor's four transvaal mines yesterday met union officials in talks on "union issues", principally to ensure the orderly operation of the mines' hostels and canteen facilities during the strike.

## Rebels attempt Manila coup

GOVERNMENT forces in the Philippines fought an attempt by up to 300 rebel troops to overthrow President Corason Aquino today, the President said in a radio broadcast early this morning, our Foreign Staff writes.

Senior officials and President Aquino said the coup attempt had ended and that only mopping-up operations were going on.

"I'd like to tell our people that first of all I am all right and I am in Manila," said Fidel Ramos (the armed forces chief) is on top of the situation," Mrs Aquino said. "In a few hours we can resolve this," she added.

At least seven people were reported killed and about 30

wounded as automatic gunfire broke out in the early morning darkness.

The rebellion is the fifth launched against President Aquino's authority since she took over 18 months ago after former President Ferdinand Marcos hastily left the Philippines today, the President said. It is the most serious challenge since dissident troops tried to seize military installations last January in what the government called a bid to restore Mr Marcos to power.

The attempted coup comes hard on the heels of a public transport strike which brought Manila to a standstill in protest against a petrol price increase sanctioned by President Aquino.

Only hours before the mutiny police had begun cracking down on left-wing union leaders in a show of government determination.

General Ramos said that between 200 and 300 rebellious soldiers moved in from barracks in northern Luzon, the main Philippine island which includes Manila.

Shooting broke out near President Aquino's palace and dissidents also tried to take over a government television station, according to loyalist forces.

To thwart the dissidents, tanks mounted with searchlights and backed by presidential guards and other troops

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## Murdoch reaps new-tech profit

BY CLARE PEARSON IN LONDON AND BRUCE JACQUES IN SYDNEY

News International, the UK arm of News Corporation, Mr Rupert Murdoch's communications group, yesterday reported sharply higher profits for the last financial year as the company reaped the benefits of the move to new technology at its production plant at Wapping, east London.

Pre-tax profits for the year to the end of June soared to £111.5m (\$180m), compared with £11.7m for the previous year when the company carried the full cost of the move to Wapping.

News International transferred to new technology early last year in the teeth of intense opposition from the print unions. Last year's figures reflected a full 12 months of production savings at Wapping, while the previous year included only the first 22 weeks.

Mr Peter Stierzenburger, News International's finance director, said production savings accounted for the major part of the boost in profitability, although increased advertising revenue and to a lesser extent the sale of the company's Australian television stations.

Pre-tax earnings from Australia and the Pacific Basin jumped from \$56.8m to \$114.2m (US\$81.6), reflecting consolidation of The Herald and Weekly Times, which the company purchased in March, and the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post, bought last December.

The US operations achieved the lowest percentage pre-tax profit rise - from \$398.1m to \$539.7m. However, directors said strong results came from Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation and CBS Fox Video.

Profits of News Corporation, the Australian-based parent, al-

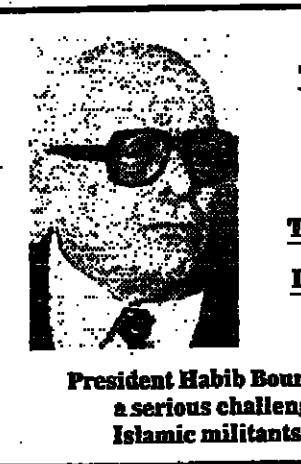
so rose, with after-tax profits emerging 51 per cent higher at \$336.4m on a 39 per cent turnover rise to \$55.3bn.

The result excluded an \$49.2m extraordinary profit mainly reflecting the sale of the company's Australian television stations.

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## EUROPEAN NEWS

## Spain promises action to counter air strike

BY DAVID WHITE IN MADRID

CHARTER OPERATORS, hoteliers and airport authorities were bracing themselves yesterday for a repeat of last week's holiday chaos, although the Spanish Transport Ministry said it would try to avert "by any means" the threatened strike by Barcelona air traffic controllers.

The main association of charter airlines, Zorba, appealed to the Government for urgent measures to protect the holiday trade following the breakdown

of talks on Wednesday night between Mr Manuel Mederos, Spain's director of civil aviation, and air controllers' representatives.

Mr Mederos was quoted as saying that the authorities would increase minimum service requirements in the event of another 24-hour strike this Saturday in view of the unexpected impact the controllers' action had last weekend, especially on the British charter business to Mallorca and the

beach resorts of eastern Spain. The tighter minimum service provisions would be aimed at a more rapid return to normal on Sunday.

The controllers at Barcelona's El Prat airport gave the Government until tonight to come up with a proposal to settle their claim for back-payment of extra pay of some Pta 10,000 (\$50) a month due to them since 1979. The authorities attempted unsuccessfully to persuade them to

hold off until September 15 for a response, arguing that this was accepted on a national level by the main air traffic controllers' union in a meeting in July.

The dispute involves payment for "special services" which controllers received up to 1979, when they were still attached to Spain's military establishment. The special payments were dropped when responsibility was transferred from the Air Ministry to the civilian authori-

ties. After contradictory verdicts by local courts in response to controllers' claims, the Barcelona case went against the plaintiffs.

The Government agreed to refer the dispute to the Supreme Court, whose decision is expected shortly.

The Barcelona controllers say that the Government is simply using delaying tactics. A further strike is threatened on September 5 if their demand is not met.

## Conservative cause finds a champion in Kremlin

THE MAN in charge of Soviet party political thinking has transformed a Kremlin debate on Mr Mikhail Gorbachev's drive for openness by defending aspects of the late Leonid Brezhnev's rule, according to foreign analysts, Reuters reports from Washington.

Mr Yegor Ligachev, a Politburo member and Communist Party secretary responsible for ideology, offered in a speech on Wednesday an interpretation of the Brezhnev years startlingly different from the picture of decay and inertia often painted by Mr Gorbachev.

While acknowledging setbacks in the 1960s and 1970s, the height of Mr Brezhnev's rule, Ligachev told a meeting of teachers that this period had also seen Soviet people improve their spiritual and material lives.

Mr Ligachev said the speech appeared the most concerted attempt yet by a senior Soviet official to portray Mr Brezhnev's rule as a time of successes as well as failures. Senior officials usually emulate Mr Gorbachev in emphasising the failures.

"This really reads like 'the kind of old thinking that Gorbachev is constantly deplores', one specialist at a Western embassy said. "Ligachev is ignoring virtually everything that Gorbachev has said about the Brezhnev times."

Mr Ligachev's speech in the town of Elektrostal, 40 miles east of Moscow, was published in extracts by the party daily It appeared in full in the relatively obscure Education Ministry newspaper, Uchitel'skaya Gazeta, and the Moscow region publication, Leninskoye Znamya.

Among passages omitted from the speech was an attack on people exploiting Mr Gorbachev's drive for glasnost (openness). "Some people are trying to use glasnost to settle personal accounts and are putting verbiage," Mr Ligachev said.

In another sentence excised from the speech, he denounced some reformist Soviet intellectuals for suggesting that the Brezhnev era had not been sufficiently thorough in condemning the repressions of the late Josef Stalin.

These remarks identified Mr Ligachev as a firm supporter of the conservative wing of the Soviet media's increasingly fractious dispute over the Brezhnev era.

Mr Ligachev has also voiced orthodox views on cultural issues, asserting the need for strict party control over the arts. He has offered less than enthusiastic support for reforms in internal party procedures backed by Mr Gorbachev.

In his remarks on the Brezhnev era, Mr Ligachev said: "National income grew fourfold. People's lives became richer, materially and spiritually. Military-strategic parity was achieved between the United States and the Soviet Union."

Mr Ligachev said was an unusually emotive passage, he described how he had spent the Brezhnev years in the Siberian region of Tomsk and Novosibirsk, where he regretted a single day of his work.

"At that time, under the party's leadership, a powerful centre of Soviet science took shape in the expanses of western Siberia through the efforts of the whole country. An oil and gas complex on a world scale was formed, he said.

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Botha to introduce restrictions on independent press

BY JIM JONES IN JOHANNESBURG

THE BOTHA Government is to introduce additional press restrictions today to curb newspapers it says are "generating support for revolutionary organisations."

The new restrictions were not specified in parliament yesterday by Mr Stomel Botha, the Minister of Communications and Home Affairs. However, they are widely believed to be aimed at independent left-leaning newspapers such as the Weekly Mail, New Nation and South.

In parliament yesterday Mr Botha said the new restrictions were needed because the newspapers and news agencies in question showed complete contempt for the hallowed press values established over centuries.

He said the Government was compelled to act because the National Congress had said it would use the press to bring about revolution in South Africa.

Though Mr Botha said the offending newspapers were to the left and right of the political spectrum, he did not mention any of South Africa's ultra-right and neo-Nazi organisations.

In another development Mr Riaan Eeksteen has denied rumours that he is to be replaced as director-general of the South African Broadcasting Corporation. The rumours have been growing since Monday when the government-controlled television gave 11 minutes coverage to Mr Allan Hendrickse, the Labour Party leader, in the evening's prime news slot. Mr Hendrickse, who is a Coloured, explained why he had quit President Botha's Cabinet.

According to unconfirmed reports from SABC staff members the news team had been instructed to carry additional coverage of letters to Mr Hendrickse from President Botha.

Tunisian trial fails to halt radical groups

BY FRANK GILES IN TUNIS

TUNISIA'S LARGEST trial of radical Islamic activists in four years started yesterday at the state security court in Tunis. The trial of 92 activists, who are accused of threatening state security and could face the death penalty if convicted, was immediately adjourned until next Thursday.

It is the culmination of an unprecedented crackdown on Islamic militants, who are now posing the most serious challenge to the Government of President Habib Bourguiba since the bread riots of January 1984. About 400 people have been sentenced in recent months to jail terms of up to six months for illegal assembly, distributing illegal pamphlets and insulting the head of state.

At least 1,500 people are now believed to be in custody, according to the Tunisian press. The trial is the largest and oldest Islamic political movement, the Movement de la Tendance Islamique, Mr Rashid al-Ghannouchi, who is one of those on trial have not stopped groups of Islamic radicals from staging regular demonstrations involving the chanting of religious slogans, stone-throwing and cap-mashing in the heart of Tunis.

But the confrontation between the authorities and Islamic militants has reached a new pitch of intensity since the explosion of four bombs in hotels in the President's district and his summer home, and Sousse, from where many other Tunisian leaders fled.

Responsibility for the Monastir and Sousse bombings was claimed by the Islamic Jihad, a shadowy radical group. But the authorities were quick to blame the MTT, Tunisia's arrested so far on connection with the explosions are said to belong to it, though those of its leaders who are not imprisoned have twice, from their European exile, disclaimed any responsibility and reaffirmed their belief in peaceful political action.

The Government is unimpressed, and believes the truest test of the MTT's aim is to overthrow the regime by any means, an endeavour in which it has the full support of Iran.

President Bourguiba broke off relations with Tehran last March after the arrest in Paris of Tunisian nationalists linked with Iranian terrorist networks. Senior officials here point to the fact that Iran's former representative in Tunis, Mr Ahmed Khamari, is a former Revolutionary Guards officer and played an active role before his appointment in building up the Hizbollah movement in south Lebanon.

The evidence the Tunisians have presented so far has, however, failed to convince some of Tunisia's closest Western allies.

Concern has increasingly focused on the large scale crackdown on anyone suspected of supporting the MTT, which has intensified since the beginning of this month. Apart from the wave of arrests, others have gone into hiding while allegations of brutality in prison and police stations abound. The short but violent demonstrations which have occurred in Tunis since March suggest the radical Islamic groups are very well organised.

The MTT was formed in 1975. It was reformed and preached non-violence. The authorities looked upon it kindly as, throughout the 1970s, they were waging battle with left wing groups, especially on the Tunis University campus.

In 1981 the MTT failed to win legal recognition ahead of general elections which for the first time allowed other parties than the PSD to campaign. Not one opposition candidate gained

a seat in Parliament and the evidence of fraud which quickly emerged led to a period of repression in 1982-1983 which split the MTT into a variety of factions.

Some activists linked up with the Hizb al-Tahrir al-Islamiya (Islamic Liberation Party), a group founded in Jordan in 1948 which believes in restoring an Islamic state by violent means, and whose headquarters are believed to be in West Germany.

Faced with these dissident groups the task of the police is not easy. Nor is it helped by the many changes which have occurred among senior Government officials in recent times, such as the dismissal of Mr Mohammed el-Fail, the former Prime Minister last year.

The radical Islamic groups do not present today a real threat to the Tunisian regime. Unlike their Egyptian equivalents who send deputies to

Parliament, the Tunisian groups do not have any real influence, let alone power in education, the police or civil service. But they are symbolic of widespread political frustration.

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Parliament, the Tunisian groups do not have any real influence, let alone power in education, the police or civil service. But they are symbolic of widespread political frustration.

Depressed industrial regions seek better deal from the EC

BY HAZEL DUFFY

REPRESENTATIVES of the industrial regions in decline in the European Community are seeking a meeting with Mr Jacques Delors, president of the European Commission, to lobby for a better deal from the European Regional Development Fund.

The regions are concerned that they will be affected adversely by the plans for full internal market by 1992, which they say will benefit better-off regions like south-east England.

At the same time, they say that they stand to lose out if Commission proposals for a re-

allocation of the fund should be adopted. These call for 80 per cent of the fund to go to less developed regions in the Community, mainly in Greece, Portugal, Spain, Ireland, Northern Ireland would also be included. The proposals compare with the present split of 70/30 in favour of such regions.

Representatives in the Association of Traditional Industrial Regions in Europe say that they want to put forward "positive proposals" to Mr Delors. These would include aid for small companies, support for new technology, training, regeneration of the en-

vironment and modernisation of the worn-out infrastructure. Members of the association include Lancashire, Strathclyde (Scotland), South and West Yorkshire and the West Midlands in the UK; Nord Pas de Calais in France; North Rhine Westphalia in West Germany; Hautain and Wallonia in Belgium; Asturias, Catalonia, Pays Basque in Spain; Piedmont, in Italy, has observer status.

Italy topped the list for Fund payments in 1986, followed by the UK and Spain. The Social Fund is also an important source of funds for the regions of industrial decline.

Madonna tops chart for Chirac

By George Graham in Paris

MADONNA is sweeping the pop music world before her, but she had to come to France to score a political success.

The rock idol from Michigan had made her latest convert not among the aging trendies like Culture Minister Francois Léotard. Madonna has gone right to the top, and won the heart of Mr Jacques Chirac, the Prime Minister.

Mr Chirac has allowed himself to be photographed in sweat-shirt and jeans, with headphones and a boyish grin. He has, it is rumoured, intervened personally with the stick-in-the-mud mayor of Soaux who did not want Madonna's concert to go ahead in his municipal stadium tomorrow night.

To cap it all, he announced that he is lowering the rate of value added tax on records from its current, swingeing 33.3 per cent to the more usual rate of 18.5 per cent.

To blame for the transformation is Mr Chirac's daughter Claude. She claims to have taken Papa to one side and played him her records, convincing him of Madonna's artistic merits.

Political commentators, of course, are quick to discount so ingenious an explanation, and link the current campaign to rejuvenate Mr Chirac's image with a parallel effort to portray his rival, President Francois Mitterrand, as old and doddering.

But Mr Chirac may be walking on treacherous ground. He is responsible for the death earlier this year of TV6, the television channel devoted mainly to music.

The decision to take away TV6's licence and allot it instead to the generalist M6 was taken by the formally independent Council for Communication and Freedom but scarcely a soul in France doubts that it was dictated from the Prime Minister's office.

French rock musicians have not forgiven Mr Chirac for the loss of TV6, and are growing distinctly restive at his failure to live up to a subsequent promise to create a new wave-band for a music television station.

Austria plans to freeze wages

BY JUDY DEMPSEY IN VIENNA

RADICAL CUTS in pensions, a pay freeze and the abolition of some benefits will form the basis for next year's budget, Mr Ferdinand Lacina, the Austrian Minister of Finance, said yesterday.

He unexpectedly outlined the Government's spending plans for 1988 at an economics forum in Alpbach, southern Austria, just a few days before the Finance Ministry holds a series of negotiations with several industries to discuss next year's budget.

Mr Lacina recommended that all salary increases in the civil service be frozen for 1988, a policy which he said will apply to pensions, too. He also proposed the abolition of the special marriage allowance of Sch 15,000 (\$750) which is given by the state to each newly married couple, as well as restructuring of tax allowances.

The Government hopes to save Sch 30bn by these measures, helping to bring the budget deficit down to 4.4 per cent by the end of next year.

A net budget deficit of Sch 74.7bn has been forecast for this year. Last month, Mr Lacina said he expected the deficit to reach Sch 80bn by the end of the year if the rate of spending continued. It could reach Sch 100bn by the end of 1988. The Finance Ministry aims to reduce the share of the net deficit in the budget from 5.1 per cent to 4.9 per cent during this year and down to 4.4 per cent by the end of next year.

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Acid rain accord takes effect

AN EAST-WEST agreement to cut sulphur emissions, considered the main cause of acid rain in the industrialised world, takes effect next Wednesday after ratification by 16 states, according to the UN Economic Commission for Europe, AP reports from Geneva.

The European countries have already met the treaty's goal of cutting sulphur output by at least 30 per cent from 1980 levels, a recent UN announcement said. But this was partly offset by increased

emissions in other countries that signed, which have until 1993 to meet the target, it said.

The 1985 accord is the first binding international treaty to cut air pollution.

The Commission is the main forum for East-West economic co-operation. It groups East and West European countries, the Soviet Union, Canada, and the United States.

The sulphur protocol, which is part of a 1985 convention on cross-border air pollution, has been signed by 21 countries. Ratifications have come from Austria, Bulgaria, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, France, West Germany, Hungary, Liechtenstein, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, the Soviet Union and two Soviet republics which the UN counts as separate countries.

Sulphur emissions in Europe and the US declined by 12.13 per cent in 1980-85, but further reductions are needed for environmental and health reasons, the Commission said.

on the Weinstrasse, the problems faced by Mr Dieter Ohmsorge, the mayor, stem less from the vineyards' troubles, more from the financial burdens resulting from 20 years of costly renovation.

Neustadt is one of the rare Palatinate towns never to have been razed in 16th and 17th century fighting - and boasts as a result more than 2,000 listed buildings. With 7m vines and production of 20m litres of wine per year, it is West Germany's largest wine town by far. And with around DM 4,000 (\$1,350) of debts per head of

its 50,000 population, it is also one of the most heavily indebted.

The town is planning its future on attracting high technology industry and boosting tourism.

Mr Ohmsorge seems to have little time for the traditional Palatinate wine festivals whose objective is to "pump people full of wine". Instead, his aim, based on new co-operation between wine growers, hoteliers and tourist agencies, is to draw more high spending individual travellers to sample simultaneously the Palatinate's scenery, culture and wine.

can get just 1 per cent of the Sch 900bn which is at the moment wrapped up in savings, we will be pleased," says Dr. Regale, who is hoping that the Austrian share-holding population will increase to 400,000 over the next two or three years. He also thinks that people must become more aware of the long-term consequences of the privatisation programme which will lead to unemployment and substantial decreases in fringe benefits and pensions. "People must understand that buying shares will give them capital for the future."

But who is putting this message across? Certainly not the government. There's none of the razzmatazz of Mrs Thatcher's appeal for a share-owning democracy. No billboards and posters urge Helmut, Otto or Gerhard to buy shares in, for example, Laenderbank, the country's third largest bank, which will be partly sold to the public.

The newspapers are practically silent, television and radio uninformative.

Dr Regale knows it will take time for Austrians to change existing attitudes to responsibility and rewards, to look towards the future and to make their own choices about how they invest their savings.

Autumn will be a first step. The pundits are already predicting a "politically hot" few months ahead.

There was no need to buy shares which were considered to be too risky."

Furthermore, he says, dividends were subjected to double taxation which was no incentive to the small investor.

Over the past year, however, double taxation has been abolished and the yields on government bond savings have been reduced, all in an attempt to make share buying a more attractive proposition. "If we

are going to shake up industry. But attitudes of risk-aversion have to be changed. Dr Alfred Regale, head of securities at Creditanstalt, Austria's largest bank, thinks the antipathy to share buying and risk-taking, besides being linked to the past, is also linked to previous government's economic policies. "Yields were very high on savings books and government bonds. People were receiving between 6 and 8 per

cent interest. There was no need to buy shares which were considered to be too risky."

Furthermore, he says, dividends were subjected to double taxation which was no incentive to the small investor.

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West Germany points 'wine road' in new direction

BY DAVID MARSH IN NEUSTADT AN DER WEINSTRASSE

WEST GERMANY'S 60-mile-long Wine Road (Weinstrasse), meandering among vineyards and villages between the Rhine and the French border, this day will be awash with the red, black and gold of the country's national colours.

As part of a summer-time day of festivities in the Rhine-Palatinate wine region, the road will be closed to the normal high speed wave of BMWs and Audis. Instead, unfurled over its length will be a continuous strip of what Germany's wine claim will be the world's longest national flag.

Quite apart from signalling renewed attachment to national colours in this Conservative-voting region, the event is designed to give a promotional boost to the wine industry, which accounts for about a quarter of the country's vineyard area.

The Rhineland-Palatinate wine region, the road will be closed to the normal high speed wave of BMWs and Audis. Instead, unfurled over its length will be a continuous strip of what Germany's wine claim will be the world's longest national flag.

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The Rhineland-Palatinate







## WORLD TRADE NEWS

# Rising wages threaten W German car exports

BY ANDREW FISHER IN FRANKFURT

RISING WAGES and the strength of the D-mark threaten a further erosion of the competitiveness of the West German motor industry, the country's automobile industry association, the VDA said yesterday.

It described the level of German wage costs, now the highest in the world based on latest currency shifts, as "a risk to be taken seriously." Further cost rises would weaken the industry's sales chances.

German manufacturers had moved steadily up-market and invested heavily in new equipment to offset their cost advantages, but the handicap was becoming more difficult to overcome, said the VDA.

Germany's cost and currency disadvantages meant that the industry's exports this year would not quite reach the 1986 level. But sales of German cars abroad were still high, totalling

HOURLY WAGE COSTS IN WORLD MOTOR INDUSTRY (1986, in D-marks)	
US	41.1
W. Germany	35.8
Sweden	34.4
Belgium	31.4
Japan	29.9
Netherlands	29.4
Italy	25.5
France	25.1
Britain	19.8
Spain	17.7

Figures include pay and social expenses borne by employees.  
Source: German Automobile Industry Association

1.3m units in the first half of 1987, just 4 per cent below the first six months of last year.

Last year, the industry invested 11bn D-marks of 17 per cent over the previous year. With total exports of DM 95bn (\$52bn), it was the country's largest exporting sector, ahead

of engineering, chemicals and electricals. Since the end of 1986, German labour costs (including social expenses paid by companies) have become the highest in the world, the VDA said.

In German currency terms, hourly wage costs are nearly DM 36.80 against DM 34.40 for the US and DM 29.80 for Japan.

The concern expressed by the VDA follows worries over costs expressed recently by Volkswagen and two local subsidiaries of US groups, Ford and Opel (part of General Motors).

The VDA said German car workers put in far fewer hours than those of competitor countries, even before the latest wage deal leading to a shorter working week of 37.5 hours.

Lombh already has arranged a better deal in Uganda for transport equipment, including 40 of MAN's 18-tonne trucks, taking crops, mainly cotton, in exchange.

MAN believes up to 100 trucks eventually will be involved in the deal.

Lombh has held the import franchise for MAN vehicles in the UK since 1982 and Britain is now MAN's best export market.

## Lombh in MAN Africa lorry deal

By Kenneth Gooding, Motor Industry Correspondent

MAN Commercial Vehicles, the second-largest West German heavy truck producer, has expanded its association with Lombh, the UK-based international trading company, to strengthen its position in some African countries.

Lombh is to supply MAN trucks to Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia, where demand for vehicles is high but where foreign currency to pay for them is limited.

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## Linde to build China gas plant

LINDE of Munich has signed an 80m yuan contract to build a gas liquefaction plant at the Zhongyuan oil field in Henan, central China, the China Daily said, Reuters reports from Peking.

It said the plant, due to be finished in about 20 months, will process up to 1.2m cubic metres of natural gas a day to produce propane, butane, natural gasoline and dry natural gas. The natural gas would otherwise have been flared and wasted.

The plant is being funded by a loan from the World Bank, the paper said, but it gave no more details.

## China and Nepal boost air links

CHINA and Nepal have agreed to begin charter flights between Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal, and Lhasa, the capital of Tibet, the official Xinhua News Agency said yesterday, AP reports from Peking.

Xinhua said China's national airline, the Civil Aviation Administration of China, will make the first flight in mid-September.

Chinese and Nepalese officials agreed that the trans-Himalayan air link would promote tourism

# Hong Kong picks Japanese lock

SELLING TO Japan is "the last frontier" for the territory's exporters, according to Mr Jack So, executive director of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council. To judge by their performance over the past 18 months, however, that frontier is being crossed.

Hong Kong's exports to Japan have begun to take off in a spectacular way. Last year they grew by 39 per cent to HK\$6.2bn, but in the first half of this year the pace accelerated rapidly with a 71 per cent increase to HK\$4.1bn.

The strength of the yen, the territory's growing reputation for producing high quality goods for the luxury end of the retail market and a determined effort, spearheaded by the TDC, to work through Japan's complex distribution system are all factors in this equation which has produced such growth.

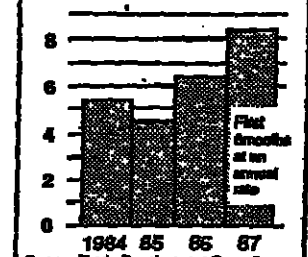
For Japan the growth in trade is a welcome demonstration that its market is not entirely impenetrable. For the world at large it shows that it is not necessarily a forlorn task, even if Hong Kong is in some ways simply the chance beneficiary of market-opening pressures applied by others — the US and Europe.

Observers of the Asian trade scene have been looking for signs of increased regional purchasing by Japan ever since the Yen began to rise in late 1985, and the US and European companies to purchase more components abroad as a means of reducing local manufacturing costs. Yet a glance at Hong Kong's trade statistics shows that this is only part of the story.

By far the largest share of Hong Kong's exports to Japan takes the form of finished goods of which the territory has long been a familiar exporter in its own right. Particularly strong have been sales of fur garments,

Improved product quality and sound knowledge of the market's vagaries helped one country to exploit the rising yen, says Peter Montagnon, World Trade Editor

## Hong Kong's domestic exports to Japan HK\$ bn.



Source: Trade Development Council

worth HK\$1.1bn in the first half, and jewellery, worth HK\$491m.

One of the more gratifying aspects of these sales is that they show how Hong Kong has been able to live up to Japan's notoriously stringent quality requirements, reinforcing its image as a territory that has been able to upgrade the quality of its exports. Since last year Japan has accepted Hong Kong's safety standards certification procedure for toys but acceptance of Hong Kong products in the Japanese market has also required aggressive promotion of its new quality image with the public.

Mr So says that Hong Kong has also had to overcome trade barriers imposed by Japan in key sectors. For example, Japan has maintained a high tariff of between 25 per cent and 30 per cent on fur garments while abolishing duty on imports of raw skins to protect the local industry. There are no quotas on imports of textiles but the Japanese authorities insist on a confirmation procedure for silk imports which takes time and works against foreign sellers.

Yet the greatest obstacle has

been the obscurity with which Japanese markets operate. This has always been a deterrent to Hong Kong exporters. "Half the effort has been in persuading people in Hong Kong to make the commitment, only three years ago they thought it was impossible to even try."

Earlier this year the TDC prepared a study of what it calls Japan's "multi-layered and complicated distribution system" for consumer goods. The work that went into this study has enabled it to advise exporters on how to tackle the Japanese market, for example by direct contact with the key department stores and wholesale organisations.

Among the problems revealed by the study were the way in which profits are absorbed by the distribution system, so that the high value of the Yen gave little price advantage to retailers themselves. But many, it says, have now started to import direct, especially in the jewellery business "where the purchase by a single retail outlet can amount to millions of Yen making the resultant profit justify the risk and cost involved in direct import."

Such a direct approach to the retail trade is made easier by the presence of some nine leading Japanese department stores in Hong Kong. "We try to tell them not only to sell but also to buy — to source their products in Hong Kong," says Mr So.

Hong Kong's exports to Japan still make up a very small part, amounting to some 8 per cent of its total domestic exports, but the additional business now being generated has helped reduce Hong Kong's dependence on the US market which now takes only 38 per cent of domestic exports compared with 44 per cent as recently as 1985. Ultimately Mr So believes that Japanese technology, Hong Kong management and capital and low-cost Chinese labour contain the seeds of a new self-reinforcing relationship of mutual interdependence.

It would be ironic if such a stronger trading link were forged as a result of US pressure on Japan to open up its markets to imports. Though Hong Kong's HK\$43.5bn trade deficit with Japan last year was the third largest in the world after the US and West Germany, the territory has never seen its effort to sell into Japan as a specific response to its bilateral trade deficit.

Hong Kong has always carefully adopted a multilateral approach to trade policy. Quite simply, says Mr So, "any business is exciting for us. That means its exporters are ready and willing to exploit any market-opening opportunities even if they are created by others."

The Japanese frontier may now be being crossed, but another one already seems to be looming. Also under pressure from the US to import more is Taiwan, and that is something which has not escaped Mr So's attention. Taiwan, he says, "is a peach ripe for picking."

## US car-making states seek new Canadian pact

THE GOVERNORS of seven top car-producing states in the US have urged Washington to negotiate a new automobile trade pact with Canada, AP-DJ reports from Lansing, Michigan.

The governors claim that the current auto agreement is "distorting investment and trade" to Canada's benefit.

"We believe that an equitable agreement which levels the existing... barriers should enhance the economies of both countries," the governors of Michigan, Missouri, Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, Ohio and Wisconsin said in a statement.

The governors say the 1985 treaty, which allows some cars to be imported duty-free between the US and Canada, "limits our ability to attract new investment and hinders our companies' access to the Canadian market."

Under the pact, US car makers must make one car in Canada for every car sold there. The pact has long been unpopular among US car-workers because therein it secures jobs for Canadians without equal protection for US workers.

## US, Iraq sign 5-year trade expansion deal

BY OUR FOREIGN STAFF

US AND Iraqi officials have signed a five-year trade agreement aimed at expanding commercial ties between the two countries.

The pact, signed by Mr Clarence Brown, Acting Commerce Secretary, and Mr Mohamed Mehdi Salih, Iraqi Trade Minister, is aimed at reducing impediments to trade and investment and simplifying visa procedures for business travellers.

Mr Brown said he expected the accord, signed on Wednesday, to enhance US business opportunities in energy, agriculture, finance, transportation, health and construction engineering.

But Phyllis Oakley, State Department spokeswoman, said Iraq would not be able to buy American weapons US policy in the seven-year-old war between Iraq and Iran prohibits arms deals with either side, she said.

The US is officially neutral in the conflict, but its navy has been escorting oil tankers from Kuwait, considered an ally of Iraq.

The pact with Iraq is an umbrella agreement, with specifics to be worked out in further talks, said Claire Buchanan, Commerce Department spokeswoman. It opens the door to co-operation in the future," she said.

Iraq is the third-largest market for US exports in the Arab world, after Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

In 1986, the United States imported \$473m in goods from Iraq, and exported \$527m worth. Petroleum topped the list of imports; agricultural products led the exports.

Trade with Iraq last year bought \$569m in goods ranging from rugs to caviar to pistachio nuts. But most sales to Iraq are subject to licensing restrictions, and the US sold only \$34.1m worth in 1986, mainly elevators and construction cranes.

Washington maintained a trade embargo against Iran until 1981, when hostages taken captive at the US Embassy in Tehran were released.

## Alfonso taps new source for Viedma

By Our Buenos Aires Correspondent

ARGENTINA's suspicious embassy residence in Tokyo is shortly to be put up for sale and the proceeds will be used to help finance the new Argentine capital at Viedma.

A Foreign Ministry spokesman in Buenos Aires said "for all practical purposes the decision has been taken to sell the property, although it may take several months yet to organise everything necessary for an international tender."

He said the funds from the sale would be earmarked for the new capital.

Official estimates placed the value of the prized piece of property in the heart of Tokyo's commercial centre of Roppongi in the region of \$250m to \$300m.

The proposal apparently is to have the present building pulled down and to construct office blocks on the site, several floors of which would then be dedicated to the Argentine Embassy and residence.

The present embassy offices are reportedly rented at \$40,000 a month. The cost of constructing Argentina's new capital in the south of the country is estimated at \$4.6bn spread over 10 years, 30 per cent of which will have to come from foreign financing.

Critics of the plan say it will divert scarce funds from other investment projects and they express doubt over the Government's ability to raise the necessary funds.

## Mexico's Volkswagen workers end strike

By William Orme in Mexico City

WORKERS AT Volkswagen, the biggest car manufacturer in Mexico, accepted a 78 per cent pay rise on Wednesday, ending a strike of nearly two months.

Production at Volkswagen de Mexico's car plant in Puebla, 60 miles east of Mexico City is scheduled to resume on Sunday. The union walked out on July 1 demanding a basic pay rise of 100 per cent plus a 25 per cent "emergency" increase, linked to a national minimum wage adjustment.

Under an agreement negotiated by government mediators, salaries were raised 78 per cent under terms that include two 22 per cent increases and a 22 per cent basic pay rise.

At the peso's current exchange rate, the new wage scale for most Volkswagen workers ranges from \$7.15 to \$12.80 for an eight-hour day. The highest-paid unionised employees earn \$19.45 a day. The contract is back-dated to July 1.

Under Mexican law the workers will receive half pay for days spent on strike. Volkswagen first proposed an immediate 13 per cent wage cut and the 700 redundancies among its 10,500 unionised workers. Plans for the redundancies have now been postponed. "There were no winners or losers here," Pascando Antezana Delgado, the union's leader, said.

Canadian initiative likely on railways

THE Canadian labour minister, Mr Pierre Cadieux, was yesterday expected to ask parliament for the power to order 48,000 striking rail employees back to work, writes David Owen in Toronto. This follows the breakdown of mediated talks between union and railway management representatives.

Common leaders were expected to begin discussions on a back-to-work bill yesterday. For its prompt expedition, such a bill requires the consent of all parties.

According to head mediator, Mr William Kelly, the talks broke down on the issue of job security.

# Reagan attacked by conservatives over arms plan

BY LIONEL BARBER IN WASHINGTON

AS PRESIDENT Reagan moves closer to an arms deal with the Soviet leader Mr Mikhail Gorbachev, he is coming under fire from his core political constituency: the conservative right.

Conservative pressure groups — long sceptical of any pact with Moscow — are stepping up criticism of the Administration.

This week, they seized on the US decision to modify safeguards against cheating in the proposed superpower accord to eliminate globally all medium-range nuclear weapons.

Mr Howard Phillips, chairman of the Conservative Caucus, said in Washington: "The climbdown on verification is clearly another step in the direction of getting a treaty at any cost."

The Administration has long argued that once Moscow agreed to scrap all medium-range missiles (instead of leaving a residual 100 on each side), the verification regime could, by definition, be less strict.

But Mr Reagan's keynote foreign policy speech in Los Angeles on Tuesday attempted to answer his critics on the right.

"Even on-site inspection is not a panacea," he said. "We need to seek compliance with existing agreements too often violated by the USSR."

From there, Mr Reagan was to address the broader question of what has become a consuming issue in Washington: how to avoid being upstaged by a Soviet leader who has successfully projected an image of change and reform in the Soviet Union and an apparent willingness for better relations with the US.

He began with an improbable request: that the Kremlin should publish its annual defence budget, reveal the size and composition of its military forecast, and engage in a public debate in its elected one-party body, the Supreme Soviet.

This proposal enjoys two attractions. First, Mr Reagan can score a propaganda point, underscoring the differences between Western democracies and a one-party state.



Ronald Reagan

Secondly, it allows Mr Reagan to show that Mr Gorbachev's alluring policy of glasnost, or openness, has its limits.

Elsewhere in his speech, Mr Reagan combined a healthy scepticism towards Moscow with what appeared to be a genuine hope for change. "We are also seeing a Soviet leadership that appears more willing to address the problems that have divided East and West so long and to seek agreements of mutual benefit."

But, in words which highlighted the need for the President to cover his conservative flank, Mr Reagan declared: "Soviet occupation forces are still waging a war of indiscriminate bombing and civilian massacre in Afghanistan" and "the Soviet Union has stepped up its efforts to impose a failed system on others."

The New York Times, in an editorial, described the speech as "curious" and drew a contrast between Mr Reagan's demand for a public Soviet military budget and less stringent verification.

The ambivalence, however, almost certainly reflects the state of Mr Reagan's mind: ever distrustful of Moscow, but aware that very shortly he could be sitting next to Mr Gorbachev about to sign, in his words, "a historic arms deal".

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## Sarney defends power of constitution

BY LIONEL BARBER IN WASHINGTON

SENATOR SAM NUNN of Georgia, the great white hope of many Southern Democrats, said yesterday that he would not enter the 1988 Presidential race.

Mr Nunn, a conservative, cited his responsibilities both to his family and to the Senate Armed Services committee, which he chairs.

His decision removes a heavyweight from the Democrat contest, providing a counterweight to the seven current Democrat contenders, none of whom has emerged as a genuine front-runner.

Incidentally, a Republican contender for his party's Presidential nomination, Mr Paul Laxalt, a former senator of Nevada, said he was not, after all, going to run. Though a longshot, Mr Laxalt, a close friend of President Reagan, said he had raised more than \$1m.

On Tuesday night, Mr Laxalt announced that his fund-raising efforts had fallen short and he did not want to risk putting his family in a "financial black hole" by entering a futile campaign.

Mr Laxalt's early exit leaves the Republican race divided between the two leading contenders, Vice President George Bush and Senate minority leader, Senator Robert Dole, and three pushing hard to catch up: the Rev Pat Robertson, Congressman Pete DuPont and Congressman Jack Kemp.

Mr Nunn had been pushed hard by Southerners and Washington political pundits to enter the race because he is far better known nationally than the present Democrat candidates, hailing the Rev Jesse Jackson, the black activist outsider. But while he is an acknowledged expert on arms control ("The Pope's Defender"), his far from liberal record on social issues such as abortion and judicial appointments would have hurt his prospects among sections of his party.

He is, however, the second Democrat national politician, after Governor Mario Cuomo of New York, to cite family reasons for not entering the campaign, an indication of the strain of running for the Presidency.

## Argentine telephone workers join public service dispute

BY TIM COONE IN BUENOS AIRES

MR NICOLAS GALLO, the president of Argentina's state-owned telephone company, Entel, has become the latest casualty in the battle over a wages policy taking place within the Government.

Mr Gallo resigned on Wednesday night after telephone workers joined a wave of strikes in the public sector. They disrupted national and international telephone and telefax communications and added to the chaos already caused by a 48-hour stoppage of train drivers and signalmen.

The telecommunications strike was apparently provoked when the Government refused to authorise a substantial wage increase which had been promised earlier to trade

union leaders by the Entel management and Mr Gallo.

State bank employees also began shift stoppages yesterday for wage claims supported by the Labour Ministry, but rejected by the Economy Ministry.

Contradictory statements continue to emanate almost daily from both ministries about the timing of a return to free collective bargaining and an end to wage controls which has been promised.

The battle over incomes policy has become one of the most contentious issues within the Government over the past six months. It is likely to have a strong influence on the results of the mid-term elections on September 6.

Peruvian writer leads protest

DEMONSTRATORS scuffled in the main square of Peru's second city, Arequipa, on Wednesday night as tens of thousands heard the country's leading writer denounce Government plans to nationalise private banks, Reuters reports from Lima.

Police said several people were slightly injured and about 20 were arrested in scuffles with Government supporters during a speech by Mr Mario Vargas Llosa against the nationalisation proposals now being debated by the Peruvian Congress.

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FOR YEARS the trials and tribulations of Tootal have read like a classic account of corporate crisis. Last autumn the new Tootal management team unveiled what reads like a textbook solution for its problems. This solution involved transforming Tootal - one of the largest British textiles groups - into a "business" dominated by manufacturing, not production; and using the cash generated by that business to diversify away from textiles into more fertile areas of activity.

The first half of that strategy is now almost complete; the second half is being implemented. The Tootal PLC today is composed of the remnants of the textiles and clothing businesses which were brought together by a series of mergers in the 1960s and 1970s, but ravaged by the economic downturn at the start of this decade.

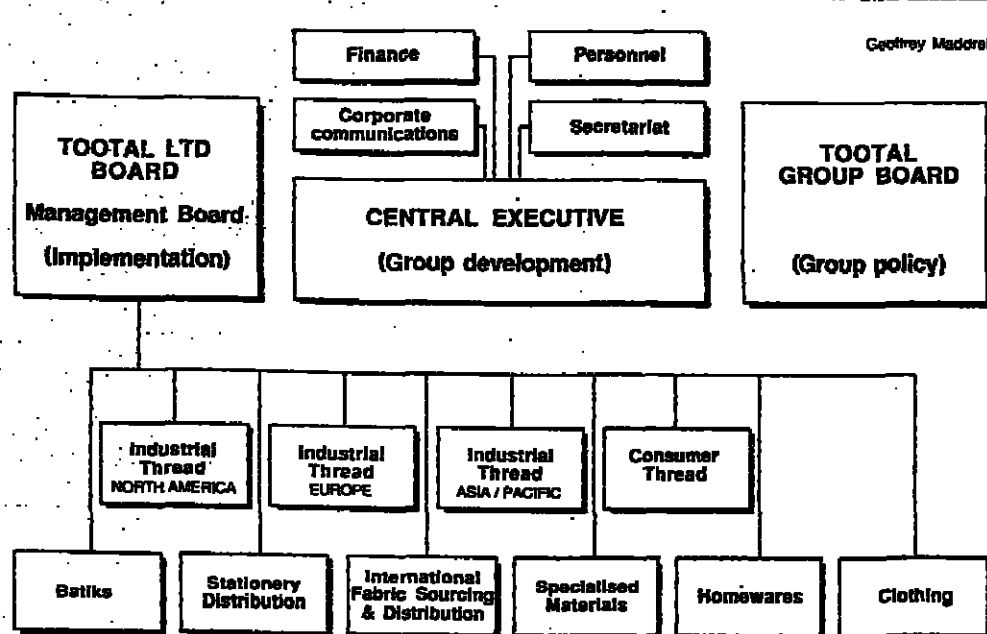
Tootal was forced to close factories and sell loss-making businesses. For the management team the priority was survival. As a result, the group was left with a rather ragged assortment of businesses which could have helped its recovery had it been able to hang on until conditions improved.

This scenario is only too familiar to many of the remnants of once strong British industries. But Tootal had a double dose of problems. No sooner had it emerged from this crisis than a predator pounced in the guise of Entrad, the Australian textiles group. The bid was defeated in late 1985 - but at the cost of a year of management distraction.

When Geoffrey Maddrell arrived from Bowater-Scott as managing director a few months later he found a demoralised management team and a company without a sense of direction. "What Tootal needed was a strategy. If there was one, then no-one knew what it was or where it was leading," he says.

In many ways Maddrell, who is 51, was an obvious choice as a strategist. The textile executives of the 1960s tend to fall into two camps: the traditionalists, typified by David Alliance of Coats Viyella, or the business school strategists, like Courtaulds' Sir Christopher Egan. Maddrell is very much in the latter camp. He plainly perceives his work at Tootal as a personal mission; his photograph is sprinkled liberally throughout the annual report.

The framework for the new Tootal is encapsulated within the "mission statement" prepared by the new regime. This describes a worldwide marketing organisation built upon providing excellent design, service and distribution skills. "The first task for the new Tootal was to introduce those skills to the established business; the second was to apply them to other, more fruitful fields."



## How Tootal geared itself up to pursue a marketing 'mission'

Alice Rawsthorn explains the UK textile group's latest strategy

and was to apply them to other, more fruitful fields. Yet a company's culture does not metamorphose when its mission statement rolls off the printing press. Tootal's metamorphosis into a marketing-driven enterprise demanded fundamental changes to its structure and culture. The Boston Consulting Group was drafted in to act as adviser.

Either the group had been divided into 50 operating companies. This posed two problems: first, the unwieldiness of running an international business across so many units; and second, the difficulty of attracting managers of a high calibre to such small businesses. Last September it was divided into ten "strategic business units" all defined by activity.

The senior management structure has been altered accordingly. Tootal's board is now split into two tiers: a group and a management board. The former includes executive directors, who decide upon strategy, budgets, management and financial systems.

In the old days the board was packed with barons who argued the case for their division then dozed off while others spoke, says Maddrell. "This structure ensures that our decisions are objective, in that none of us has a sentimental or financial at-

tachment to the businesses."

A group of non-executive directors - led by John Craven, chief executive of the Morgan Grenfell merchant bank, as non-executive chairman - also sit on the group board, while the management board is composed of the operational heads of the divisions.

But instilling marketing awareness in a company like Tootal, which would have hooted at the concept only a few years ago, requires more than restructuring and a realignment of managerial responsibility.

The group has invested heavily in training - £500,000 will be spent this year - and is working with Cranfield School of Management to devise training schedules. The objective is for 100 managers to train for at least one week a year.

Salaries have been restructured to emphasise growth and profitability. Thus senior executive bonuses are divided into two parts: one half for meeting targets, the other for mapping out objectives for the future.

Similarly the commission paid to the sales force at American Thread, the largest single business, is now based on a combination of volume, profitability and new accounts, not volume alone.

Tootal has also attempted to improve internal communica-

tion. In the past, partly as a legacy of its crises, people tended to "do what they were told and not to ask any questions," as Maddrell puts it. Information is now circulated more freely and annual conferences are organised for senior executives to keep them abreast of group developments.

This new structure has been introduced over the past year. The consensus in the City is that the theory sounds fine, but the pressure is mounting for Tootal to prove that it will work in practice, not least because it is still beset by bid rumours. The most recent roll-call of potential predators included Coats, Coloroll and Courtaulds.

Thus far the new strategy has been fully implemented in only one area of activity: industrial threads, the biggest part of the business, which provided half of the group's £240m turnover last year. The new management team has yet to tackle other areas such as clothing and homewares.

Threads is a commodity business, with poor profit margins. The customers, chiefly clothing manufacturers, carry low stocks, need new supplies swiftly and have very specific requirements. There are, for example, 40 shades of black thread alone. Thus there is an opportunity for a supplier to

steal a competitive edge by offering a faster and more flexible service.

Tootal - which, together with Coats Viyella, dominates the international thread market - plans to exploit this by concentrating its spinning activities in low-cost countries, specifically in China where it has established a joint venture. The spun thread is then shipped to "mini-mills", or finishing centres, from which it can offer a speedy service to industrial customers.

When new clothing markets open up, Tootal will be able to move in swiftly as a thread supplier at relatively low cost. Similarly, if a market loses steam, then the group will not be lumbered with expensive assets.

In theory this strategy sounds simple; in practice it will be rather more difficult to implement. Some of the established vertically integrated mills, in Australia for example, will have to be rationalised into mini-mills.

Moreover American Thread, the largest business, not only operated under-capacity but did not control distribution. The solution in the US was the acquisition of the threads interests of Standard-Coats-Thatchers last December. At a stroke this filled American Thread's surplus capacity and provided it with an efficient distribution

network. American Thread's new management - headed by Richard Rinaldi, who was brought in from the autoparts industry - is now trying to drum marketing skills into the business. The benefits are already filtering through. American Thread's earnings, traditionally 7 per cent of capital employed, should creep into the low teens this year en route to the target of 20 per cent.

Maddrell uses threads as an example to illustrate how the new strategy will work. Yet in this area Tootal has the triple advantage of a dominant position; historic links with China; and a clear opportunity to steal a competitive advantage. Other areas may prove more problematic.

The group is now in the throes of completing a review of homewares which will decide how to develop the business in the future. Similarly it plans to spruce up its clothing interests, which embrace a buoyant business supplying Marks and Spencer, Britain's largest retailer, but rather lacklustre brands in Slimma women's wear and Tootal men's wear. The Slimma brand is being strengthened with the introduction of new co-ordinated ranges. The future of men's wear is less certain. The group will continue in this field but may drop the use of "Tootal" as a brand name.

Tootal took its first step towards diversification last year with the acquisition of Sandhurst Marketing, which markets and distributes stationery and office equipment. It had looked at several prospects: searching for companies within areas of high growth where marketing and distribution skills are crucial. At one stage it considered paper distribution, but concluded that companies like Bural were already entrenched.

Ostensibly textiles and office equipment have little in common, but Maddrell argues that there is a compatibility of discipline in that both businesses rely on the strength of their marketing and distribution skills. Future acquisitions will follow the same pattern.

Yet Tootal itself still has a long way to go before it can claim to have nurtured these skills. Maddrell argues that the acquisitions will play a dual role in that they take Tootal into more fertile fields and will introduce new management teams already well versed in the marketing disciplines so sorely needed by the established business.

Expansion through acquisition is fraught with problems, as is instilling new disciplines in old businesses. In pursuing its new strategy, the group will have to grapple with both problems. In the next year or so it should become apparent whether Tootal, and its textbook tactics, can bring it off.

### Origins

## 'T'ain't products are boring'

Christopher Lorenz on cultural ambiguity

THE NEW Anglo-Japanese Rover Sterling car has made something of a splash in the lucrative American market, but at heart it is a "Tain't" product.

Unlike the far more successful new Jaguar, it is culturally ambiguous. Britain is its main country of origin, but the car possesses no characteristic which could possibly identify it. The source of this complaint is Bill Stumpf, a leading US design consultant. The Sterling is a "Tain't" product because 'ain't Japanese and 'ain't British. And 'ain't products are boring," he says.

Stumpf's attack provoked intense debate in Amsterdam last week at Design 87, an international conference of 1,500 industrial, graphic and interior designers. Many of the participants echoed his criticism of the rapid emergence of an anonymous "international style" in consumer products such as cars, hi-fi and televisions.

In the mad rush by manufacturers to reap economies of scale in production and distribution, and to develop "global designs", not enough market research was being done into continuing differences in national lifestyles and preferences, Stumpf complained.

The result was not only the potential destruction of cultural diversity, but - as other speakers emphasised - the potential alienation of consumers. Since products without any particular character tend to command little customer loyalty, their manufacturers were running a grave commercial risk, several designers pointed out.

Between these two sets of extreme views, several speakers pointed to the growing tendency of Japanese companies to design both global and regional products (or even national ones) in parallel. In the words of Karl Weidemann, Professor of Communication at West Germany's Koblenz School of Corporate Management, "there will be no uniform style, but a new burst of pluralism."



The Rover Sterling - a 'Tain't' car

### Spot the power station.

If all you can see is a mountain, that's as it should be. Because Dinorwig Power Station in North Wales was designed and built by the Central Electricity Generating Board to be concealed in the heart of a mountain.

Dinorwig is the largest pumped storage power station in Europe. It can supply electricity for several large cities for up to five hours and has the fastest response of any pumped storage scheme in the world.

For all its advanced technology the basic principles behind Dinorwig's design are easy to explain.

Almost seven million cubic metres of water are held in a reservoir in the mountain and released when electricity is needed.

Water cascades down tunnels and shafts within the mountain at a rate of 420,000 litres per second, driving turbines which turn a generator to produce power.

The generators can be delivering their maximum output within seconds.

The water is collected in a lower reservoir and pumped back up through the turbines at night, when electricity demand reduces, ready for re-use.

As you can see, the principle behind preserving the beauty of the environment needs no explanation at all.

  
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## UK NEWS

## Building societies to enter credit card age

By Hugo Dixon

**BUILDING SOCIETIES** are to be allowed to issue credit cards and engage in electronic cashless shopping after a decision by the Government to amend last year's Building Societies Act. This is likely to bring more competition into these two areas which have traditionally been dominated by banks.

The Government had originally intended societies to be able to do both things but, because of an error in drafting the Act, it turned out they could not.

When this was discovered earlier this year, both Halifax and Abbey National, Britain's two largest societies, had to face the embarrassment of withdrawing resolutions from their annual meetings asking members for permission to join Visa and Mastercard, the two main credit card companies.

The problem stemmed from the fact that the Act prevents societies from making unsecured loans of more than £5,000 to each customer. Even if societies fixed credit limits at £5,000 or less, it was theoretically possible that customers would find ways of spending more than that before the societies could stop them.

There was a similar point concerning electronic cashless shopping. The only way of preventing customers spending more than an agreed limit would have been to insist that all transactions were authorised instantaneously, but the system being designed for Britain by the clearing banks will not insist on this.

Mr Gerald Watson, deputy chairman of the Building Societies Commission, the industry's regulatory body, said yesterday that to get round this, the Treasury will lay an order before Parliament when it opens in October. He said he expected it to be debated in November, after which it would come into force.

Mr Watson said the order would allow societies to issue credit cards and engage in electronic cashless shopping.

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IT SHOULD have been high drama. But yesterday's first annual meeting of British Gas was more like tedious soap opera.

Sir Denis Rooke, the company's redoubtable chairman, was prepared to face the largest collection of shareholders ever gathered in the UK and take questions on three potentially explosive issues.

But yesterday a mere 3,000 shareholders turned up at Birmingham's National Exhibition Centre to taunt him. This was fewer than the turnout at British Telecom's first AGM, half the number who had said they would come, and less than one fifth the audience with which the armies of blue-coated British staff were prepared to cope.

One of the organisers was heard muttering "What a washout" as shareholders left the three-hour meeting. Sir Denis had ample cause for relief at the way the meeting had gone.

Shareholders overwhelmingly rallied round British Gas in its opposition to the appointment to the board of Sir Ian MacGregor, the former coal board chief who had been nominated by Sheffield Forgemasters, the company leading a band of protesting industrial gas customers.

Lucy Kellaway sees warring factions succumb to coffee and biscuits

## Gas shareholders rally round board

Sir Denis neatly silenced complaints from this corner over its industrial gas prices with a speech on the inappropriateness of price transparency in the industrial market. He got off even more lightly on the issue of the disclosure of information to the Office of Gas Supply, its protesting regulator, with not a single question raised on the matter.

Instead, Sir Denis's notoriously bad temper was more severely tried on the issue of lower charges from pensioners, the statement in report and accounts of the increase in his salary (seven times the increase paid to the company's average employee, one shareholder claimed) and on the paucity of the contributions made by British Gas to charity.

Throughout, Sir Denis was polite and, with one or two brief lapses, held his cool. The fiery chairman, who told an analyst asking an awkward question at a pre-luncheon meeting to "get knotted", was not in evidence yesterday.

Instead, Sir Denis appeared as a diminutive figure standing on the stage of the cavernous auditorium, flanked by twin video screens displaying a much blown-up image of a

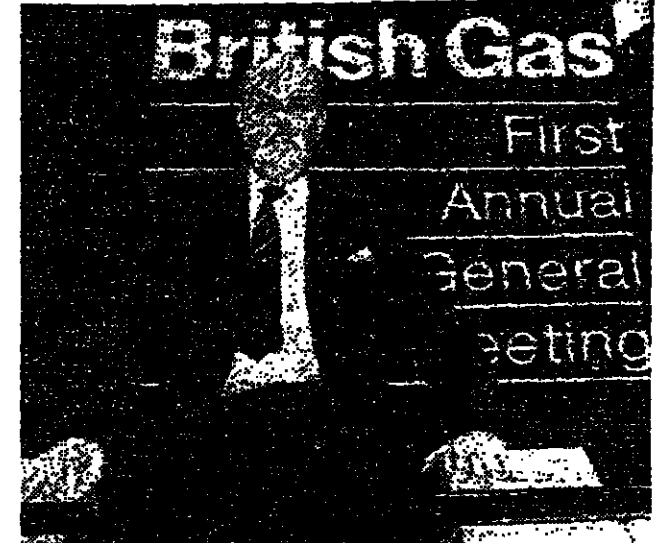
patient if severe chairman. He answered the most objectionable inquiries with: "I don't actually entirely agree with what you say, but we shall bear your comments in mind."

It was hard not to feel sorry for the organisers of the meeting. The impressive exhibits mounted in the hallway, including one of the Morecambe Bay Gas field in north west England, attracted only a handful of curious onlookers, with most of the audience, most of whom were well over retirement age, more interested in the free coffee and biscuits.

Inside the sparsely-filled hall, a woman in black evening dress was repeating the chairman's words in sign language transmitted on six television screens in the auditorium for the hard of hearing. Among the few shareholders who seemed in need of such a service, two spent the meeting fast asleep.

Meanwhile, the facilities which could have beamed the whole board and all the questions into a neighbouring exhibition hall, which was opened to cope with the expected overspill, went unused.

British Gas yesterday gave in to the demands of the Government-appointed regulator for details of its calculations for the fixing of prices



Sir Denis Rooke yesterday: neatly silenced complaints

for domestic consumers, Max Wilkenson writes.

The corporation had previously refused to send its workings to the Office of Gas Supply, which is charged with oversight of domestic tariffs. However, just before the an-

ual meeting the figures arrived at Ogas in an envelope.

Mr James McKinnon, the director, is studying the data to decide whether it meets his requirements. If it does, he will lift his threat of legal action against the corporation.

## New leader for SDP will move in without challenge

BY PETER RIDDELL, POLITICAL EDITOR

MR ROBERT MACLENNAN is now certain to become leader of the Social Democratic Party without a challenge, although three of the party's four other MPs announced last night that he would not be speaking for them.

Nominations close at 8pm tomorrow evening, when Mr MacleNNAN will formally become leader and will make the leader's speech to the SDP conference starting in Portsmouth on Tuesday.

Mr MacleNNAN, the MP for Caithness and Sutherland since 1986 and a former junior Labour minister, has switched to favouring negotiations with the Liberals on a merger after the vote in favour by SDP members in this month's ballot.

However, Mr MacleNNAN received support yesterday from a senior former SDP MP who also opposed merger in the ballot, Mr Ian Wigglesworth, who said he had the

right experience for the negotiations.

After a two-hour meeting of the party's five MPs in a subterranean House of Commons room, Mr John Cartwright, a strong opponent of merger with the Liberals, said he had decided not to let his name go forward for the leadership.

He argued that there was only one leader of the SDP and that the sooner Dr David Owen (the former leader) "is restored to his natural position the better for social democracy and for the future of British politics."

Mr Cartwright said that Mr MacleNNAN had been told that his position was not shared by a majority of his parliamentary colleagues.

He did not rule out the possibility that the three anti-merger MPs (also including Mrs Rosie Barnes) might move a vote of no confidence

in Mr MacleNNAN depending on his stance in the negotiations with the Liberals starting this autumn.

The anti-merger MPs argued that the leadership should remain vacant, but Mr MacleNNAN said last night that it was now imperative that the post should be filled to protect the party's constitutional integrity and unity, and policies.

This messy outcome with the new leader being opposed by a majority of the MPs indicates the likely depth of the divisions at the Portsmouth conference.

There is almost certain to be a bruising public procedural clash in the main merger debate on Monday. The anti-merger group have put forward an amendment arguing that there should be the choice of joining a new party or remaining as members of the SDP.

## Tories prepare for Scottish shake-up

BY JAMES BUXTON, SCOTTISH CORRESPONDENT

THE SCOTTISH Conservative Party yesterday embarked on a fundamental reform of its organisation. It involves a considerable strengthening of the party's Central Office in Edinburgh and financial autonomy for the Scottish party.

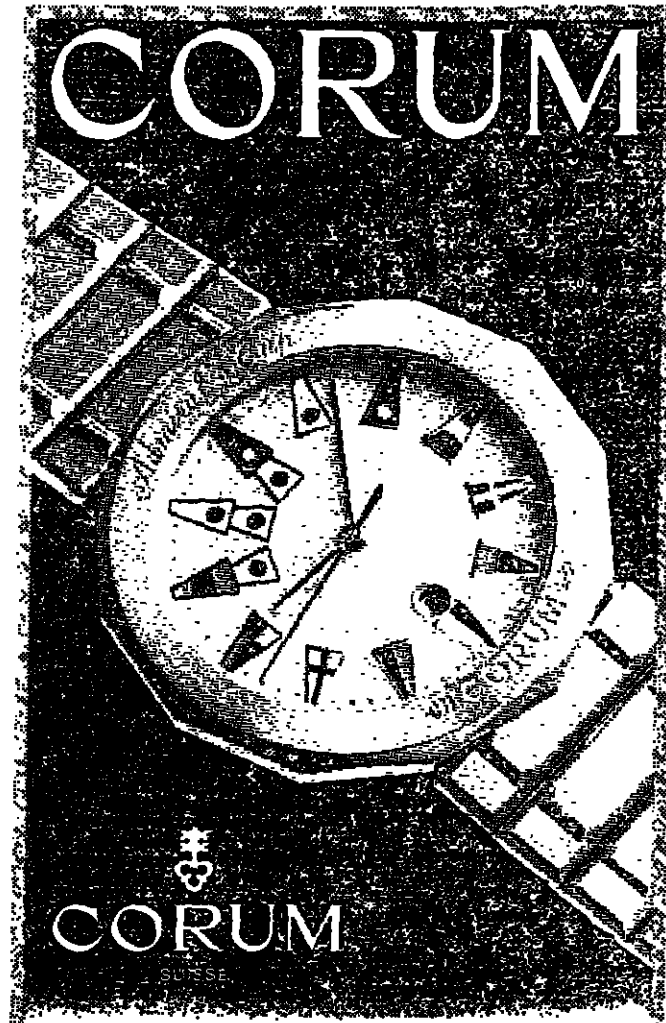
The shake-up follows the Scottish party's disastrous performance in the June general election, when the Conservatives lost 11 seats, leaving them with only 10 members of parliament. The debacle has been blamed in part on weak organisation and poor presentation of party policies.

Mr John MacKay, who was minister responsible for education and agriculture at the Scottish Office until he lost his seat in Argyll and Bute at the general election, is to take the newly-created post of chief executive. The present Scottish director of the party, Mr Bill Henderson, is leaving to take a senior party post in England.

The organisation under Mr MacKay is to be strengthened. A research director with a substantial staff is to be appointed to boost the present vestigial research organisation. There is to be a communications director and deputy to handle relations with the media - one of the party's weak points.

In future the Scottish Conservative Party will control all the funds it raises in Scotland, which at present are sent to England for redistribution by Central Office in London. The party believes that this autonomy will make it easier to raise money from Scottish businesses and individuals.

Lord Gould, the chairman of the party, said yesterday that the organisation would cost between 25 and 30 per cent more to run than before, though he did not disclose what the party's annual income was. The staffing of the central office is likely to go up from about 18 to 25.



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## SOCIETE GENERALE DE BELGIQUE GENERALE GENERALE MAATSCHAPPIJ VAN BELGIE

Public Limited Company  
Incorporated in Brussels by Royal Decree on August 28, 1822  
Registered Office: 30 rue Royale, 1000 Brussels  
Trade Register Number: Brussels 17487

The Extraordinary General Meeting held on Wednesday, August 26, 1987 was not able to vote as the statutory quorum was not reached. A second meeting will consequently be held on Tuesday, September 8, 1987, at 11 a.m., in the company's reception rooms at 30 rue Royale, Brussels, with the same agenda. This second meeting will be able to vote, whatever the number of shares represented.

## AGENDA

- Capital increase
    - Initial capital increase for an amount of BF 3,011,246,548 by the issue of 2,405,149 "part de réserve" shares. The amount of the capital increase and the number of shares may be increased in line with the number of "part de réserve" shares issued after June 30, 1987 and up to six days before the subscription lists open as a result of the exercise of warrants attached to the 2 1/2% 1987-84 DM bonds of Generale Internationale Finance, Luxembourg "GIF" S.A. These "part de réserve" shares will be identical to existing shares, except that they will only carry dividend entitlement as from January 1, 1988 and they will not enjoy the special rights and privileges temporarily linked to the 5,771,702 ATF shares issued following the Extraordinary General Meeting of October 25, 1983. They will be issued at an accounting par value of BF 1,252 plus a premium calculated in such a way that the issue price is not less than 75% of the average stock exchange price during the three months ending on the day before the price is fixed, nor more than the highest stock exchange price recorded during the eight days preceding the fixing of the price, corrected to allow for the difference in dividend entitlement.
    - They will be offered for public subscription for cash on a preferential basis, without fractions of shares being issued, to holders of existing shares, including those resulting from the exercise of warrants attached to the above-mentioned bonds, in the proportion of one new share for every ten old ones. The shares must be fully paid up upon application. Charges will be borne by the company.
  - A second capital increase for an amount of BF 62,600,000 maximum by the issue of 50,000 "part de réserve" shares maximum. They will be issued at the same subscription price as the shares referred to under Point 1 and will be identical to them in all respects. Report of the Board of Directors and the Examining Auditor and waiver of pre-emption rights by shareholders. These shares will be offered for subscription for cash to members of the company's staff and to managerial staff of affiliated companies in accordance with the criteria, terms and conditions laid down by the Board of Directors of the issuing company. The shares must be fully paid up upon application. Charges will be borne by the company.
  - Laying down as a condition sine qua non for the capital increases that the underwriters have not exercised their option to withdraw their undertakings for any of the reasons below at the latest on the last bank working day before the subscription lists open:
    - the occurrence in Belgium or abroad of a political, military, economic, financial, monetary or social event liable to jeopardise the issue;
    - closure of the Brussels Stock Exchange for at least two consecutive business days;
    - a fall of more than 300 points in the general return index of Belgian shares published by the Brussels Stock Exchange Commission compared with the index on the day the underwriting agreement is signed.
  - Allocation of issue premiums resulting from the above capital increases to an unavailable issue premium account which, along with other contributions, will constitute a guarantee for third parties and may only be reduced or abolished by resolution of the Extraordinary General Meeting passed in accordance with Article 72 of the Companies Act.
  - Increase of the statutory reserve by the amount required to bring it up to one-tenth of the company's new capital, by withdrawal from the available reserve.
- II. Authorisation to be given to the Board of Directors:
- to increase the company's capital by BF 20 billion in one or more instalments within a renewable period of five years by contributions in cash or in kind or by capitalisation of reserves, in replacement of the balance of the authorised capital created on March 7, 1985 which was still available after allowing for the amount set aside for the exercise of outstanding warrants;
  - to issue convertible bonds or bonds with subscription rights within the limits of the authorised capital;
  - to restrict or abolish, in the company's interests, shareholders' pre-emption rights in the case of capital increases for cash or issues of convertible bonds or bonds with subscription rights.
- III. Alteration of the Memorandum and Articles of Association:
- Alteration of Article 3 to update it and bring it in line with the preceding resolutions;
  - Alteration of Article 32: in the first paragraph replace the words "the first Tuesday in May" by the words "the third Tuesday in June."
- IV. Powers of the Board of Directors to implement resolutions adopted by the General Meeting, particularly in respect of fixing issue prices.
- In order to attend this Extraordinary General Meeting, shareholders must, in accordance with Article 29 para. 2 of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, deposit their shares by Tuesday, September 1, 1987 at the latest either with the company or with Banque Belge Limited.

E. DAVIGNON  
DirectorBrussels, August 27 1987  
J. de FAUCONVAL  
Director

## Mountleigh in bid for property portfolio

By Steven Butler

Mountleigh, the fast-moving UK property group, yesterday said it had exchanged contracts to buy the property portfolio of Pension Fund Property Unit Trust (PFPUT) for £263.5m in cash, subject to approval by unit holders.

Mr Geoffrey Goodwill, Mountleigh director, said the property purchase would not affect Mountleigh's decision on whether to proceed with a bid for Storehouse, the UK retailing conglomerate.

The deal comes in £26.5m higher than a bid for PFPUT by Trafalgar that was opposed by the PFPUT Committee of Management, and eventually rejected by the unit trust holders two weeks ago.

The quick move for the PFPUT portfolio confirms Mountleigh's emergence as a major player in the property market and would be financed entirely by cash on hand and bank borrowing.

Mr Goodwill said it would be inappropriate to comment on plans for the properties prior to final approval of the deal.

Although Mountleigh will have the backing of the PFPUT Committee, it still must obtain support from 50 per cent of the unit trust holders, some of whom favour retention of their property investment through PFPUT.

The opposed bid from Trafalgar obtained support from 45 per cent of the unit trust holders, although in that case a 75 per cent majority would have been required.

Mr Marlar said Mountleigh contacted PFPUT immediately following rejection of the Trafalgar bid, and that the Mountleigh offer was the highest of about half a dozen other proposals.

PFPUT has a wide range of shop, office, industrial and agricultural properties in the UK, topped by two valuable office freeholds in the City of London.

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# Hinkley reactor 'would create 10,000 jobs'

By MAX WILKINSON, RESOURCES EDITOR

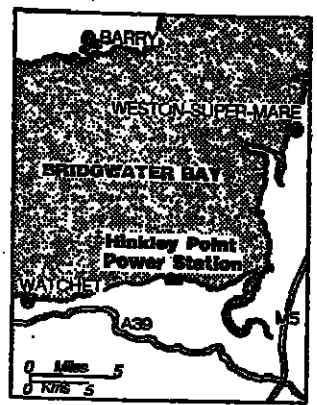
ABOUT 10,000 jobs would be created during building of the Hinkley Point C nuclear reactor, according to a report by the Central Electricity Generating Board yesterday. The board is applying for government permission to build a pressurised-water reactor at the site on the Bristol Channel, starting in 1990.

The cost of the station, which would replace the PWR being built at Sizewell, Suffolk, would be about £1.5bn. Building would take six to seven years. About 90 per cent of construction work could go to UK companies and about £300m would be injected into Somerset's economy.

The proposed station would be built beside an ageing Magnox reactor and a new advanced gas-cooled reactor. The Magnox station is due to close in the mid-1990s and the AGR soon after 2000. The new reactor would be one of five or six the board hopes to build in reconstructing its plant over the next 25 years. Six other sites are being investigated for PWRs and three for coal-fired stations. There are in addition to the plans for building coal-fired stations at Fawley, on Southampton Water, and at West Burton, Nottingham.

The board is likely to meet shortly to the Hinkley project at a planning inquiry. However, it hopes the wider issues on the safety and economics of a PWR will not need to be re-examined.

Yesterday, Mr Sam Goddard, board director of system planning, said preliminary work for the station had included a detailed environmental audit. Local authorities had been con-



Hinkley Point C nuclear reactor site on the Bristol Channel.

sulted extensively on environmental impact.

"If they decide to object, it is better for everyone in the community, the CEGB and national energy interests—that a public inquiry is held as soon as possible so that important planning decisions are not delayed," he said.

Friends of the Earth pledged to oppose the Hinkley PWR. Mr Stewart Boyle, national energy campaigner, said yesterday: "This application bears all the hallmarks of an institution which is utterly unresponsive to public opinion and totally beyond public control. Following Three Mile Island and Chernobyl, it is quite clear that the public does not want and will not tolerate any more nuclear power." The application was a gross misuse of public funds.

Mr Tom King, MP for Bridgwater, said he supported nuclear power, provided it was safe. He did not believe Britain's power industries should be totally dependent on coal.

## Customers oppose large water charge increases

By RICHARD EVANS

WATER CONSUMERS are reluctant to pay considerably higher charges to accelerate environmental improvements. That was the main conclusion of a survey conducted recently by Wessex Water.

The survey, which was part of an extensive publicity campaign on the options facing the authority, found that three main tasks were outlined: the number of beaches that needed to be brought up to European Community standards; the need to replace or update sewage treatment plants and sewerage systems; and the need to reduce river pollution.

Two options were presented to customers throughout the region, which covers Avon, Dorset, Somerset, most of Wiltshire and parts of Gloucestershire and Hampshire.

Water charges could either be increased above the rate of inflation to resolve the matters quickly or they could be increased in line with inflation and the goals achieved over a longer period.

More than two to one were against the larger increases, in spite of general dissatisfaction with the cleanliness of river and sea waters, the survey said.

Higher charges were favoured by 25 per cent, but 60 per cent preferred keeping increases to the level of inflation. Fifteen per cent expressed no opinion.

## Fund to hand out £54m for development in Ulster

By Our Belfast Correspondent

THE INTERNATIONAL Fund for Ireland, which was set up after the Anglo-Irish Agreement to provide aid for social and economic projects, yesterday announced £54m in development grants to Ulster and border regions of the Irish Republic.

The money involved has been donated by the US, Canadian and the New Zealand governments.

Mr Charles Brett, chairman of the fund, said £5.5m would go to investment companies, £7.5m to business enterprise and £8.5m to tourism. Urban development is to receive £5.5m, agriculture and fisheries £3.5m and science and technology has been allocated £6.5m with a further £6.5m going towards what the fund calls "wider horizons" which will include exchange schemes.

Mr Brett said the fund's board had retained a reserve of about £4m to be used for the future development of the programmes and for a few worthwhile projects that did not fit into any of the specific categories.

The money will be allocated over the next two years. The fund has also announced that it has allocated £3m in immediate grants to £17m projects.

Mr Brett said that £17m of the £54m total had been allocated to business development and investment. Two investment companies were currently being set up with resources of £5m each. He said that further details of the spending would be released in the next few weeks. The fund has already received more than 1,600 applications for grants.

## Manchester law firms to merge

TWO Manchester law firms—Leak Almond and Parkin, and Cobbett—are to merge on October 1, enabling them to offer a wider range of services.

The merged practice, to be known as Cobbett Leak Almond, will have 28 partners and more than 100 staff. Leak Almond is widely involved in commercial property development, while Cobbett has a specialist reputation in the brewing industry and licensed trade.

Mr Anthony Fielden, senior partner, said: "It will be increasingly necessary to have greater resources in terms of specialist legal staff and modern electronic equipment to provide the level of service demanded by commerce and industry."

## Jet engine may serve as smoke generator

By DAVID FISHLOCK, SCIENCE EDITOR

AN INEXPENSIVE jet engine, being developed for small, unmanned aircraft, may find a second application as a smoke generator to conceal tanks, the British Association's annual conference in Belfast learnt yesterday.

The US army is testing the engine's ability to camouflage a tank with clouds of smoke or infra-red absorbing dust. Dr David Art, of the department of mechanical engineering, Queens University, Belfast, told the engineering section.

The robot aircraft market wanted an engine of about 500 Newtons thrust that was cheap and expendable, but contenders were all priced over £20,000. The university had the idea of designing an engine using mass-produced diesel turbo-charger components in place of the most expensive parts of a jet engine—the turbine and compressor wheels.

The project began in 1979 and initially achieved thrust of 100 Newtons at a turbine entry temperature of 925 degrees C using propane as fuel.

It was successful enough to persuade Normalair-Quest to fund a bigger version, designed to give 550 Newtons thrust, the size the company believed would find a market for use in robot aircraft.

Holset Engineering provided matching compressor and turbine units, assembled as a special turbo charger. The university designed the combustors, within a 127 mm, and with a flame tube only 100 mm in diameter.

That demonstration model had to burn kerosene, since propane was unsuitable for the operating conditions required. Fuel also cooled a heat exchanger used to transfer heat from the turbine bearings. The device ran for an hour at 70,000 rpm.

In 1985, Garrett Normalair learned that the US Army wanted a gas turbine as a smoke generator on armoured vehicles, fulfilling the twin function of vapourising oil for a smoke screen and blowing infra-red absorbing dust clouds.

Successful demonstration of a modified engine led to an order for six more, for field testing. Most of the parts for that batch were made by the university, Dr Art said.

Researchers are developing a new combustion chamber for the smoke-generating version. The engine version is now seen as a family of small jets using the

## SCIENTISTS CALL FOR FURTHER £100m FUNDING

BRITISH science needs an extra £100m a year, leading scientists attending the annual conference of the British Association for the Advancement of Science said yesterday.

They applauded government plans announced last month for restructuring academic science—placing greater emphasis on "strategic research"—to take effect in about 10 years.

Lord Dainton, a past president of the British Association, asked: "We like the

restructuring, but where is the lolly?"

Sir Kenneth Durham, the association's president and deputy chairman of British Aerospace, called on Mrs Margaret Thatcher, the Prime Minister, to stop cuts and find more money.

The new structure includes a committee—the Advisory Council for Science and Technology (Acost)—reporting to the Prime Minister, which will decide which sectors of science should be supported. Mrs Thatcher has said she

wants to participate in some of the bi-monthly meetings of the committee.

The Government's intention is for Acost to help to determine which sectors of science should be abandoned to release extra funds for other sectors. Acost holds its first meeting late next month.

The British Association said in a statement yesterday that the Government's recent refusal to provide more than minimal funding for the British space programme had "done little to engender confidence."

geneticists and process biotechnologists, in order to design enzymes with improved properties for the process as it runs in a chemical plant."

Prof Blow said three billion years of evolution had been very successful in making enzymes "of exquisite sensitivity and great catalytic power," such as the light-harvesting systems of green plants and the recognition devices of the immune system.

New man had the power to build his own enzymes "within the limits of his own skill and imagination."

## Versatile materials

### ENCOURAGE innovation

NOVADAYS it was possible to make any engineering artifact from almost any starting material, including springs from Portland cement, superconductors from ceramic and magnets from plastics, said Professor Anthony Kelly, vice-chancellor of Surrey University.

That dramatic change resulted from an understanding of the micro-structure of solid materials, an understanding of the properties of defects, the ability to measure and control composition down to clusters of just a few hundred atoms, and from "all sorts of microscopes," he said.

All engineering materials were really composites, but the term composite had been given fresh meaning when it was recognised that judicious blending could yield startling new combinations of properties, such as great strength and stiffness at very low weight, or electrical properties in a plastic.

High strength and stiffness at low density was a basic requirement for aerospace materials, said Dr Stephen Bold of the BP Research Centre. Strength was necessary so that wings would not break off under the maximum loads of manoeuvring, and stiffness was needed to limit deformation.

Mr Burt Rutan, in designing his Voyager aircraft for its 25,000-mile round-the-world flight, went to the limits of deflection. Its carbon-fibre wings were scraping the ground at take-off, but curved upwards once they were in the air.

By blending 50 per cent carbon fibre with an aluminium alloy, the metal's stiffness could be tripled, but the composite was difficult to make



## Belfast heat and power proposal

A COMBINED heat and power (CHP) scheme, burning local deposits of lignite, was proposed for Belfast, which, provided it achieved a 72 per cent penetration, could be economically viable, Professor Bernard Crossland told the engineering section in his presidential address.

Prof Crossland, Emeritus professor at Queen's University, is an engineering consultant associated with the Belfast CHP scheme.

Profitability of the proposal was marginal at present, he admitted, and carrying it out would cause Belfast considerable disruption.

"Every engineer knows," he said, "that the density area will have to be dug up." It would be 22 years from the start of construction to full maturity of the scheme.

Analyses suggested that the economic case was probably not strong enough to attract 100 per cent private-sector investment, bearing in mind the risks of not reaching a 72 per cent penetration of the market.

Prof Crossland believes the return would be enough to justify opening a small, albeit a small part of the funding could be provided by the private sector, if the balance was provided on suitable terms by the government and supranational sources to compensate for the risk."

He forecast that, at Belfast, there would be a project, "future generations would

wonder at our foresight and initiative, just as many of us wonder at the drive and initiative of our Victorian forefathers."

## Enzyme engineering can aid medicine

REDESIGN of natural enzymes, known as "enzyme engineering," was beginning to affect medicine and industry, said Professor David Blow of Imperial College, London, in the first Kathleen Lonsdale lecture to the British Association.

Enzymes are protein catalysts—living organisms that accelerate chemical reactions. Unlike other catalysts, however, enzymes are very specific about which molecules they will accept for the reaction, remaining completely indifferent to others.

The first experiments in enzyme engineering were made in the past five years at Imperial College, by bringing together three different skills: genetic manipulation to alter the gene that produced a modified enzyme; X-ray crystal

## Launch for Welsh institute to steer principality into future

By ANTHONY MORETON, WELSH CORRESPONDENT

THE Institute of Welsh Affairs, intended to draw together all sections of Welsh economic, social and cultural life, is to be launched next month.

Mr Henry Kroch, chairman, said in Cardiff yesterday that the principality was "undergoing an economic transformation which has led to something

of a crisis of identity." The institute would clarify the direction in which the country should go and develop policies to "enhance the life of the people of Wales."

It would not be a pressure group, he said, but would bring pressure to bear on a range of subjects by building public and

private-sector partnerships with agreed common objectives. The institute has not yet been officially constituted, but has set up its first study into how the industrial valleys of South Wales can be regenerated. It also plans research on the arts in Wales and problems facing rural areas.

The names of all those associated with the organising committee, probably 50 strong, will be announced until the official launch on September 29. Mr Kroch, former chairman of AB Electronics, was joined yesterday by Mr John Foley, a South Wales officer of the Iron and Steel Trades Con-

federation; Mr Ian Kelsall, Welsh director of the Confederation of British Industry; Sir Donald Walters, Welsh Development Agency deputy chairman; Mr Keith James, of Cardiff solicitors Phillips and Buck; and Mr Idwal Symonds, HTV (Wales) chairman.

## "Balance of payments strength sets stage for growth"

Extracts taken from the address by Dr Gerhard de Kock, Governor of the South African Reserve Bank, at the sixty-seventh ordinary general meeting of stockholders of the Bank on 25 August 1987



Dr Gerhard de Kock

### Balance of payments and foreign debt servicing

It is a matter of recorded history that after enjoying three gold "boom" years in 1979, 1980 and 1981, the South African economy was buffeted by a series of adverse economic and political developments. These events resulted in a withdrawal by foreign banks of credits to South African enterprises from July 1985, a substantial net outflow of capital to other parts of the world, a depreciation of the rand, the imposition at the end of August 1985 of a partial debt standstill and the simultaneous reallocation of exchange control over non-resident equity investments. Since that time these de facto financial constraints have been reinforced by selective de jure financial and trade sanctions imposed by some legislatures and/or governments.

The challenges posed by these adverse developments were daunting indeed. Most serious of all was the net capital outflow, including debt repayments, of R15.5 billion (US \$7.4 billion) during the two years 1986 and 1987. But the facts now show that the South African economy rose to the occasion and responded with an almost unparalleled demonstration of balance of payments adjustment, strengthening of the foreign reserves, interest servicing and debt repayment, in this way a solid foundation has been laid for renewed economic expansion.

**Current account surplus**  
In 1984 there was still a deficit on the current account of the balance of payments of R2.9 billion. This deficit was transformed into a surplus of R6.9 billion in 1985. In 1986 this surplus increased to R7.8 billion or 5 per cent of gross domestic product—a high ratio by any standard. Present indications are that, despite the projected rise in real gross domestic product, the current account surplus will be maintained in 1987 as a whole will be between R5 and R6 billion (between US\$4.4 and US\$4.9 billion).

**Foreign debt servicing**  
At the end of August 1986, when the standstill was first imposed, the total debt of the South African economy amounted to US\$23.7 billion. By the end of December 1986 this figure had declined to US\$20.4 billion, valued at the dollar exchange rates that had prevailed at the end of August 1986.

In actual fact the process of debt repayment started well before the standstill was imposed and has continued after the end of 1986. All in all, the South African economy has now repaid about US\$4.5 billion of foreign debt since the end of 1984. Of this amount about US\$880 million represented repayments "outside the net". The remaining amount of US\$4.5 billion of the International Monetary Fund, Reserve Bank credits and ordinary trade credits.

That South Africa was never overburdened and is, in fact, technically underleveraged, is clear from any application of the accepted criteria for assessing a country's foreign debt situation.

Thus, for example, South Africa's total foreign interest payments in 1986 amounted to only 40.7 per cent of exports of goods and services, compared with an average of 87.8 per cent (and over 40 per cent in some cases) for Western Hemisphere developing countries. Moreover, in 1986 South Africa's debt declined to 87 per cent, and for 1987 it is estimated at a mere 7.7 per cent.

Similarly, South Africa's ratio of foreign debt to total exports of goods and services, which even at its peak level of 471 per cent in 1984 was not so high as 408 per cent in 1986 and to an estimated 30 per cent in 1987. In contrast, the comparable ratio for Western Hemisphere developing countries deteriorated from an average of 677 per cent in 1984 to 305 per cent in 1986 and an estimated 309 per cent in 1987.

Against this favourable background, mutually satisfactory debt repayment arrangements were negotiated in February 1987 with foreign creditor banks by a South African delegation under the leadership of Dr Chris Steyn, a former Minister of Finance. Under these Second Interim Arrangements a longer debt standstill period, namely from July 1987 to June 1990, was agreed upon and a formula for the repayment of about US\$4.5 billion of debt was also agreed which allowed creditors to convert debt inside the net to long-term debt outside the net. Debt so converted becomes repayable over a ten-year period.

The first major repayments under the new arrangements of about US\$300 million were made comfortably in July 1987 without any noticeable pressure on either the exchange rate or the gold and foreign exchange reserves. According to the agreed formula, the next major debt repayments amounting to about US\$800 million will be made in December 1987.

Present indications are that, in addition to continuing to meet all foreign interest and dividend payments punctually, the South African economy will by the end of 1987 have made net repayments of roughly US\$4.8 billion (close to R40 billion) of foreign debt, valued at constant US dollar exchange rates, over a period of only three years. As a percentage of exports of goods and services, these net repayments amount to an average of about 7.7 per cent per year.

**Gold and foreign exchange reserves**  
Despite these large debt repayments the gold and foreign exchange reserves of the Reserve Bank, the rest of the banking system and the Government increased from a low point of US\$4.9 billion at the end of April 1986 to a figure in the vicinity of US\$8.8 billion at the end of July 1987—equal to about 3½ months' imports of goods.

**Exchange rates**  
From a low of 36 US cents on 21 June 1986 the commercial rand appreciated to 50 US cents on 20 May 1987, before declining to its present level of around 48 US cents. Against a trade-weighted "basket" of currencies the rand at present stands at 26 per cent higher than on 21 June 1986. The financial rand also moved up from about 38 US cents at one stage in June 1986 to a peak of 35 US cents on 20 March 1987, before receding to its present level of around 33 US cents.

**Monetary and fiscal strategy**  
One reason was the successful maintenance of low and order, and the resultant improvement in overseas perceptions of the South African situation. Another factor was the rise in the gold price from an average of US\$317 per ounce in 1986 to US\$368 per ounce in 1987, and to an average thus far in 1987 of US\$343 per ounce. Clearly, however, a major role was also played by the monetary and fiscal policies pursued from roughly the middle of 1984, including the Reserve Bank's action in raising the bank rate by 3 percentage points to 11.75 per cent on August 1984, which resulted in the prime overdraft rate of the commercial banks moving up to 15 per cent. In the course of this policy had the desired effect of curbing the growth in the money supply.

By the second quarter of 1985 it was clear that the objectives of eliminating over-indebtedness and producing a large surplus on the current account of the balance of payments had been achieved. These favourable results paved the way for the monetary authorities to apply an expansionary strategy from about the middle of 1985 onwards. In accordance with this policy the Reserve Bank has since May 1985 reduced its bank rate in steps from 24.75 to 8.5 per cent. This helped to bring down the prime overdraft rate from 28 per cent to its present level of 12.5 per cent.

These interest rate declines have been fully reconcilable with effective control of the money supply. In March 1986 the Reserve Bank, with the concurrence of the Minister of Finance, set a target range of 15 to 20 per cent for the rate of increase of the broad money supply (M3) between the fourth quarter of 1985 and the fourth quarter of 1986. As matters turned out, M3 remained below the target range during most of the year, and eventually increased by only 10.1 per cent over the full target period. This sluggish growth of M3 was a major reason why the Reserve Bank, in accordance with established monetary targeting principles, let interest rates down to the extent that it did.

In the event, total spending and production increased favourably to these expansionary measures. The final outcome was an increase in nominal gross domestic product between the fourth quarter of 1985 and the fourth quarter of 1986 of 4.4 per cent, equivalent to 4.8 per cent in real terms.

Another factor that made a major contribution to the improved situation was the official exchange rate policy of managed floating, which has remained essentially unchanged since its introduction in 1979. The exchange rate movements that occurred under this policy not only helped to bring about the large current account surplus and to protect the gold and foreign exchange reserves, but also contributed to the economic activity against the deflationary impact of the various adverse extraneous developments between 1983 and 1986. Thus, for example, the depreciation of the rand that occurred at certain stages served to maintain or increase the real value of the gold output and of many other South African exports. At the same time it afforded additional protection to many domestic manufacturing industries competing with imports.

On the negative side, the depreciation of the rand was clearly the main reason for the acceleration of the inflation rate between 1983 and 1986. When, therefore, the gold and foreign exchange reserves strengthened after the second quarter of 1986, the Reserve Bank provided the opportunity to allow the forces of demand and supply to bring about an appreciation of the rand.

### Improved but still sluggish domestic economy

Given the favourable balance of payments and domestic financial developments of the past year, the performance of the "real" domestic economy to date has been disappointing. Technically the economy has been in a cyclical upswing since the middle of 1986. But thus far the promise of a vigorous upward thrust has not been fulfilled. Present indications are that while the growth rate of real gross domestic product will exceed 3 per cent in 1987, it may not reach the 3 per cent projected earlier.

Why has the upswing been so sluggish? Why has money been chasing paper in the financial markets instead of bricks, mortar and steel? The evidence suggests that a major part of the upswing still lies in a lack of sufficient business and consumer confidence. The paradox is that the financial sector is experiencing high blood pressure while the real economy suffers from low blood pressure.

### Policy implications

Monetary policy will remain expansionary as long as the present situation persists. A new (lower) target range was set in March 1987 for the rate of increase of M3 of 14 to 18 per cent between the fourth quarter of 1986 and the fourth quarter of 1987. It is believed that the attainment of this target will be consistent with a protected further acceleration of real economic growth and a further gradual decline in the rate of inflation.

The adoption of this target range for M3 naturally implies that interest and exchange rates must be reasonably flexible and able to adjust to changing circumstances. If, therefore, the demand for credit were to rise strongly as the present economic upswing gains momentum, a rise in interest rates might well form an essential part of any package of monetary measures applied to prevent the money supply from "overheating" the target. Given the present sluggish state of the economy, however, interest rates are unlikely to show any pronounced upward tendency during the months ahead.

The Reserve Bank remains deeply concerned about inflation, but does not, in the present abnormal circumstances, favour a severe tightening of monetary policy in order to accelerate the process of reducing the rate of inflation.

The main cause of the temporary acceleration of the annualised quarterly rate of inflation from 14.8 per cent in the fourth quarter of 1986 to 26.0 per cent in the first quarter of 1987 was (exceptionally) not excess aggregate demand but the marked depreciation of the exchange rate between 1985 and 1986. This is borne out by the fact that, following the appreciation of the rand during the past year, the rate of inflation has slowed down to around 15 per cent during the first two quarters of 1987. Present indications are that it should decline still further in the period ahead.

The official exchange rate policy will remain one of managed floating. The appreciation of the rand during the past year was welcomed by the Reserve Bank as an important disinflationary influence. To avoid undue inflationary economic growth, however, an emphasis on steady rapid further appreciation of the rand will be moderated by Reserve Bank intervention in the foreign exchange market. On the other hand, the recent strength of the balance of payments and the reserves has also placed the Reserve Bank in a better position to prevent an undesirable depreciation of the rand by selling dollars from its reserves.

Although they are vitally important in their own right, the various short and long-term economic policies currently being applied will not, by themselves, be adequate for the task at hand. If they are to succeed they will have to be underpinned by the continued maintenance of law and order and by further political reform. An essential ingredient of the real recipe for growth in present circumstances is the restoration of confidence. The economy will not approach anything like its optimal performance until business and consumer gain a more positive vision of South Africa's social and political future.

The good news is that the remarkable strengthening of South Africa's balance of payments and foreign debt situation during the past year has set the stage for a continued and more vigorous upswing in the domestic economy in the years ahead. Technically, the economic omens are now so favourable that even a relatively modest improvement in confidence and demand could be enough to initiate a period of rapid economic growth and rising standards of living for all.

South African Reserve Bank



UK NEWS

# Open College sets out first year's syllabus

By CLARE FEARSON

THE OPEN COLLEGE, the ambitious long-distance learning initiative that will use national broadcasting to try to improve vocational training, yesterday announced details of its first year's courses, which will go on the air next month.

It was also announced yesterday that TV-am had agreed to provide weekend air time for the college, in addition to Channel 4's half-hour daytime weekday slots, which will appear from September 21.

Mr Michael Green, chairman, said: "The Open College is undoubtedly the most exciting and progressive training initiative for several decades. It will change the face of skills training in this country."

The college is offering a wide range of courses geared to companies and individuals. It anticipates attracting 50,000 students in its first year and is hoping for up to 1m students over the next five years.

However, the college will face

a considerable task in encouraging thousands of potential students to enrol in the next three weeks.

The college has more than 100 local enrolment centres, and students can also enrol through the National Distance Learning Centre. So far, however, it has spent very little on planning marketing and advertising. College managers accept that their public profile is not yet established.

The project, for which the Government has provided £15m for start-up finance, is also seen as a key test of industry's commitment to training. Company sponsorship is expected to play a large part in its financing.

The organisers are hoping that it will become self-financing from a combination of industrial sponsorship and fee income within three years.

own qualifications but students can obtain credits towards a nationally recognised qualification.

Initially, it is offering 38 courses grouped under headings ranging from Getting Started—which covers basic literacy and numeracy skills—to Industry and Technology, which includes courses in hydraulics, circuit training and design.

Study is done through radio, television and video programmes, audio cassettes and workbooks. Prices range from £20 for a course entitled The Effective Learner: a guide for people studying, to £450 for China: the business briefing.

Unlike the Open University—which the college is designed to complement—all course material will be subcontracted and the college will operate with a small commissioning staff of about 40.

Of the expected total of 50 courses in the first year, 20 will have been adapted from existing material.

# Gifts market keyed up for second auction

By Janet Bush

THE Government bond market is keying itself up for Tuesday's July balance-of-payments figures, with yields on longer-dated stocks stuck at 10 1/2 per cent and very little sign of retail buying interest.

The market is also beginning to turn its attention to the timing of the Bank of England's second experimental auction of gilt-edged stock. The prospect of the supply of a tranche of up to £15m in long-dated gilts has been one of the factors—including continuing uncertainty about trends in the trade balance and bank lending—hanging over the long-dated end of the gilt market.

The Bank has said the auction would be held about the middle of September and primary dealers have been speculating that it will be on Wednesday, September 16. However, it will probably be a week later.

The later date would give the market a breathing space after the trade figures as well as time to digest provisional money supply figures for August, due to be released on Friday September 18.

The prospect of nervousness ahead of the money-supply figures might weigh heavily against bidding in the auction on September 16. In addition, preliminary study of bankers' returns suggests the year-on-year growth rate of the narrow money supply aggregate, M0, might have fallen to 4 1/2 per cent in August from 5 1/2 per cent in July.

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James Buxton reports on a top-level party shake-up

# Where Scots Tories went wrong



John MacKay: an assertive Thatcherite

IN THE general election campaign a volunteer called at the Tory Party office of an Edinburgh marginal to help canvass for a couple of hours but was surprised when told it had run out of leaflets so there was nothing he could do. However, the situation was being remedied: the constituency agent was waiting for a bus to party central office in Edinburgh to collect more leaflets, and would return in an hour.

That story is typical of the poor organisation and often lackadaisical attitude found in some constituencies at the election when the party lost 11 of its 21 Scottish seats. It contrasts with laser-like attacks by the Scottish Labour Party on target seats, when manpower and resources from its many safe seats were poured in.

Yesterday the Scottish Conservative Party announced its reorganisation of its central office. Mr John MacKay, a former Scottish Office minister who lost his seat in the election, is to be chief executive of a strengthened organisation.

The party is also to achieve more financial independence from its UK parent and intends to try harder to promulgate policies being implemented by its ministers.

Few doubt improvement in the party organisation is essential if it is to make a comeback. However, will it work and will it be enough?

Although the Tories have been in office since 1979, the party in Scotland has often been a furive, demoralised institution, poor in its communications with the media, which in Scotland is mainly hostile to it.

Sir Alex Fletcher, former MP for Edinburgh Central, who lost his seat, is not alone in saying the business community, much of which did well under Thatcherism, should have openly supported Tory policies. There was no equivalent in Edinburgh of the merchant bankers in London who canvassed on returning home from work. Lord Gould, party chairman, believes the Scots treated the election like a by-election, believing Tories would win anyway and deciding to indulge themselves by voting against the party—to give it a shock and perhaps extract political concessions.

Like Mr Malcolm Rifkind, Scottish Secretary, he also says that party because of the effects of the oil-price downturn, the economic recovery and the fall in unemployment had barely reached Scotland before the election.

However, some Tories say publicly that the party is seen in Scotland as an English party that does not care about the Scots. Although devolution was a minor election issue, that the Tories opposed it added to their anti-Scottish image. Further, while Tories do not say so publicly, they are seen in Scotland as a deeply unsympathetic figure of the type Scots loathe.

Some academics say the party has always had a weak base in Scottish society, due to historical factors aggravated by Scotland's different, less stratified social structure compared with that of England.

The type of person who votes Conservative in the English Midlands would not necessarily vote Conservative in Scotland, says Mr Chris Allen, of the department of politics at Edinburgh University.

Consequently, he says, many of the Government's policies, such as privatisation and reducing local authorities' power, are policies for English problems, with little relevance for Scotland where, for example, local authorities command greater respect than those in England.

Nevertheless, Mr Rifkind yesterday made clear the Tories are to go on showing themselves to be the most radical force in Scottish politics—with policies including introduction of a strong measure of parental control of state schools, breaking up of vast council estates and stimulating entrepreneurship through privatisation of electricity boards.

Mr MacKay is an assertive Thatcherite with an attractive personality who was a mathematics teacher in Oban before becoming an MP. He is generally acknowledged to be a good person to put over these policies convincingly. He is popular in the party and should enthrone more rundown constituency associations.

Mr Allen says: "The Conservatives are to be glad they are to go on showing themselves to be the most radical force in Scottish politics—with policies including introduction of a strong measure of parental control of state schools, breaking up of vast council estates and stimulating entrepreneurship through privatisation of electricity boards."

Mr Rifkind and Mr MacKay, however, presumably disagree. The alternative is serving up watered-down Tory policies. That, says the party right in Scotland, amounts to the slogan "we will give you the same as Labour, only less of it."

# British Steel expands in W Germany

By Hazel Duffy

BRITISH STEEL is strengthening its presence in West Germany, a steel stockholder, which specialises in structural steels finished to individual requirements.

The deal, effective from October 1, takes British Steel into the high-value end of the West German market for pre-finished structural beams for the first time.

The purchase has been made by Walter Blume, the Stuttgart-based steel stockholding subsidiary of British Steel. No price has been put on the transaction.

Eisen-Werner, also based in south Germany, will continue trading under its own name, and Mr Gunter Werner, the former owner, will remain in charge and become a member of the Blume management team.

British Steel described Eisen-Werner as a significant supplier of structural steels throughout southern Germany.

The corporation's policy of expansion into steel stockholding on the Continent dates back to the early 1970s, and more recently its improving financial position has led to an acceleration of the programme, with purchases in France, the Netherlands and West Germany over the past year, and in Canada.

# NEC to invest £17m in electronics plant

By LYNTON McJAIN

NEC, THE Japanese electronics company, is to build an additional factory at Telford, Shropshire, at a cost of £17m, bringing to £53m the investment in production facilities for NEC's four main product groups. They are communications equipment, computers, electronic devices and home electronics.

The factory will manufacture electronic 24-pin dot-matrix printers. Ninety jobs will be created initially, but the total figure might be 200 jobs over five years.

Telford Development Corporation said yesterday the company was already building the first of its factories on a 48-acre site. Plans had been announced in January to invest £56m in production facilities for NEC's four main product groups. They are communications equipment, computers, electronic devices and home electronics.

Up to 900 people are expected to be employed by the early 1990s, making, in order of importance, video cassette recorders, followed by colour televisions, mobile telephone systems, facsimile machines and radio-pagers.

NEC is to make the dot-matrix printers as replacements for earlier models on the European market, with 90 per cent of production likely to be exported to the Continent. By 1991, turnover from the production and sale of the printers is expected to be £77m.

The company is to start recruiting employees for training and production trials, with full-scale production expected to start by December in factories occupied temporarily while the new premises are being built.

NEC's investment is being supported by a regional aid grant from the Trade and Industry Department believed to be worth about £7m.

NEC already has a factory at Livingston, near Edinburgh, making semiconductor chips, of which it is the world's largest producer. The unit, which it announced that it was to manufacture the latest generation of high-powered semiconductor memories there.

● Samsung, South Korea's biggest manufacturing company, has leased a 50,000 sq ft unit, through its Samsung Electronics (UK) subsidiary, in Telford's Stafford Park enterprise zone.

The unit is to be the company's main national distribution centre outside south-east England and will employ 25 people initially. It will also be the main service centre for Samsung's range of consumer electrical goods, and will be the first investment in Telford by a South Korean company.

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# Scotch whisky exports up 3%

By Lisa Wood

EXPORTS of Scotch whisky for the 12 months to June showed a 3 per cent increase in volume and a 5 per cent increase in value, to £1.1bn, according to the Scotch Whisky Association.

Mr Ivan Straker, chairman of the association's public affairs committee, said the overseas earnings marked a record and confirmed the industry's position as Scotland's largest net export earner.

In the first six months of this year exports earned £499m, an increase of 3 per cent over the same period of last year.

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# Building society liquidity rules relaxed

By HUGO DIXON

THE Building Societies Commission, the industry's regulatory body, has relaxed its approach to liquidity in the latest example of its more flexible attitude to supervision.

From October 1, the responsibility for ensuring that societies have sufficient liquidity will rest with the societies themselves. They will be expected to draw up policies setting out

the form in which they are holding liquid assets and the extent to which those are concentrated in one institution.

That contrasts with the commission's earlier proposal that no society should be allowed to make deposits with any bank of more than 10 per cent of the society's capital or 10 per cent of the bank's. The commission said it accepted that that was too rigid an approach and that

societies should simply have to report any exposure of more than 10 per cent.

The commission has also said it will allow societies to hold other societies' floating-rate notes but has not relaxed a rule preventing societies from investing more than 25 per cent of their assets in other societies' securities, although it has agreed to review that

# Barclays issues 1m Connect cards

By HUGO DIXON

BARCLAYS BANK has issued 500,000 Connect debit cards, Mr Seymour Fortescue, the bank's general manager, said yesterday.

Connect is the first of a generation of cards designed to pave the way for electronic cashless shopping. When it was launched in June, it ran into

opposition from retailers who objected to the proposed commission charges.

Barclays then made some concessions, with the result that there are now only a few "local difficulties," according to Mr Fortescue.

At the time of Connect's launch, the Office of Fair Trading threatened to investigate Barclays under the Competition Act for a possible abuse of its monopoly position in the market. The office is believed to be waiting before it decides whether to proceed until it has had time to assess how small retailers are being treated.

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# Appeal for coherent TV policy

By Raymond Snoddy

BRITAIN urgently needs a ministry of communications to produce a coherent policy for television, satellite and cable, the Edinburgh Television Festival was told last night.

Mr Philip Whitehead, an independent television producer, said in the McTear Memorial Lecture that the Trade and Industry Department, with its enthusiasm for technology, set things off but seemed to bother little about what happened next.

The Home Office—which formally has responsibility for broadcasting—then had "to get things done to earth again, mulling over the enthusiasm of others."

What was needed was a ministry that could combine an enthusiasm for the potential of the technology with an overview of its use.

A proper communications policy and a ministry to distinguish between "end" fashions and first principles" was vital if, as he expected, the next government were to embark on the creation of a national fibre-optic grid to deliver a vast number of television channels.

Mr Whitehead, a former Labour MP, warned the Government against going ahead with the Peacock Committee recommendation that Channel 4 should be turned into a separate company selling its own air time. Channel 4 is a subsidiary of the Independent Broadcasting Authority funded by subscription from the ITV companies.

The ITV companies would hammer a stand-alone Channel 4 into the ground with competitive scheduling and discounting of advertising and thus

# SDP to debate defence and education papers

By PETER RIDDELL, POLITICAL EDITOR

ACCEPTANCE OF the Trident missile system and proposals for education vouchers are put forward in 10 policy papers that the Social Democratic Party will debate at its conference in Portsmouth starting on Sunday.

The papers, representing the personal viewpoints of the authors, are under the title Looking Forward: Issues for 1991, and will form the theme of a series of debates at the conference.

Mr Simon Head, a journalist and defence specialist, argues that if the SDP is "serious about defence, and about our role in Europe, we are going to have to

take another look at Trident, unpalatable though that may be."

Mrs Anne Sofer, a former member of the Inner London Education Authority, raises the possibility of a modified form of education vouchers usable by parents at the school of their choice.

He plan, intended to increase choice and the independence of schools by ensuring a plurality of providers, is, however, different from the voucher schemes normally associated with the free-market right

half of local parties and unions favour change but the margin, in a complicated list of choices, was narrow.

The single most favoured option, supported by about two-fifths of those replying, is to have mandatory ballots for all selections, with constituencies required to ensure every eligible member has the chance to vote.

That is narrowly favoured over retaining the status quo in selections. Here, MPs are re-elected and candidates are selected by smaller groups on general management com-

mittees. Labour Weekly yesterday reported that an average of 40 people, fewer than one in 10 replies favoured the option backed by Mr Neil Kinnock, Labour leader, and by two leading unions, the TGWU and GMB.









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## Arts Week

F | S | Su | M | Tu | W | Th  
28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 1 | 2 | 3

### Exhibitions

#### LONDON

**The Tate Gallery.** Turner in the new Core Gallery. The Turner Bequest, which amounts to nearly 300 oil paintings, finished and unfinished, and a further 19,000 or so watercolours and drawings, has been a source of controversy and discussion ever since it came into the nation's hands more than 130 years ago. Turner had always wished for a gallery to himself which would show all aspects of his work. Whether he would have approved to a self-referential extension to the Tate as a suitable setting is a nice question. The larger paintings may be hung too low for one who lived in a more ostentatious age, and the tasteful oil-on-canvas has been for the principal galleries is a far cry from the rich plum he is known to have preferred. The vulgar neo-deco of the entrance hall has little to recommend it. But eight rooms for paintings and one for watercolours give room enough, and with the three reserve galleries upstairs, every painting but the few in restoration or on loan is on the wall.

#### PARIS

**The Painter in Front of his Mirror:** A collection of 222 self-portraits from the 18th to the 20th century shows the infinite variety of ways in which an artist regards himself. From a painstaking likeness to a self-representation under the traits of a mefisto or the devil, from thickly laid brushstrokes to the lightest of lines, painters show their own image for friends - or for posterity. **Louvre des Antiquaires,** 2 Place Palais Royal. (429 72700) Ends Sept. 5. **Invitation to a Voyage:** A delightful exhibition based on a Louis Vuitton collection, conjures up the excitement of travel from the middle ages till 1933, with finely tooled 15th and 18th century cases for jewels, knives and globes, with ornate leather trunks - and a Saché Guitry wardrobe case. The toilet sets dangle with silver and crystal, ivory and tortoise shell, a French Coupe, a Dutch Royal sledge with a Japanese palanquin evoke adventure against the background of exotic travel scenes, while the Pullman era usher in the luxury of discreet comfort amid the bustling porters. **Musee des Arts Decoratifs,** 107, Rue de Rivoli (4360 3214). Ends Aug 30.

#### WEST GERMANY

**Kassel: Museum Friederionum Orange:** Documents 8 World exhibition of contemporary arts: paintings

sculptures, theatre performances, architecture and design. The Documents was founded in 1956 by local painter Arnold Böcklin with Henry Moore, Alexander Calder, Marc Ernst and Joan Miro and is an important venue for modern art. This year director Manfred Schneckenburger presents the works of 150 artists, and for the first time open air sculptures which will be erected in Kassel's city centre. Artists exhibiting include Ian Hamilton Finlay, Javier Mariscal, Robert Morris, Mark Newby, Alexander Melamid, Eric Fischl, Leon Golub, Robert Longo and Joseph Beuys. There is also a separate exhibition 'The Ideal Museum' where 12 architects present their ideas for museum construction. Ends Sept 29.

#### ITALY

**Venice: Ala Napoleonica and Museo Correr:** 'Madness and Italy', over 250 works by one of the most poetic of 20th century French painters. The exhibition includes paintings, drawings, and Matisse's entire output of sculpture (75 pieces in all), lent by private and public collections in France and America, and the Musée Matisse in Nice. Pierre Schneider, the organizer, has attempted to show how the works of Italian painters such as Mantegna, Pollaiuolo, Giorgione and Veronese may have influenced Matisse. Until October 13.

**Rome: Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna (Viale delle Belle Arti):** 'La Stanza della Memoria': views of interiors, portraits and conversation pieces from the Press collection. The catalogue is almost more delectable than the exhibition itself: the delicate oils and watercolours get lost in the austere spaces of the gallery. The nostalgic title refers to a period (1718-1870) when the aristocracy of Europe were united as never before or since, a period for which Mario Praz, anglophile, literary critic, and Professor of English Literature at the University of Rome, had a passion. He recreated with accuracy and affection the atmosphere at his Casa della Vita. Palazzo Ricci in Via Giulia. Praz's passion for empire style began when still a child and he was still buying new pieces at the age of 85, a year before he died. It is said that it proved impossible to buy Palazzo Ricci itself, so that these delightful objects could have been seen in their proper setting. Until September 6.

**Rome: Palazzo Braschi (Piazza San Pantaleo) 1: Carlo Carrà (1881-1966):** Over 200 works by one

of the most lyrical of Italian contemporary painters, many with clear echoes of those artists known to have influenced him, such as Giotto and Piero Della Francesca. Nearly divided into sections corresponding to his futurist, metaphysical and Realismo Magico periods. Ends Sept 16.

**Rome: Palazzo Braschi: Painter-Photographer in Rome: 1945-1970.** The term 'Painter-Photographer' was used almost up to 1970 to describe the early photographers, even if they had never painted. An absorbing collection of documentary photographs of Rome, including a collection by the English archaeologist, John Henry Parker, and some striking portraits, all from the archives of the Rome Comune. Ends Sept 27.

#### NETHERLANDS

**Overholland Museum (Museumplein 4):** Roy Lichtenstein retrospective, with 275 drawings from 1961 to 1986, including preparatory sketches and collage studies for murals. Ends Sept 13.

**Madrid: Fernando Botero.** Colombian painter whose imaginative work is a poetic distortion of reality. 100 works on loan by private collectors, museums and artist's funds. Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Santa Isabel 52. Ends Sept 6.

#### NEW YORK

**Museum of Modern Art: Berlinart 1981-87.** An international assortment of 30 artists who worked in Berlin over the past 25 years includes David Hockney, Malcolm Morley and Georg Baselitz. Ends Sept 6.

#### CHICAGO

**Art Institute: 18th century Turkish art that flourished under 'The Lawgiver' Sultan Suleyman is displayed in 210 objects including illustrated manuscripts, inlaid woodwork, rugs and the imperial wardrobe. Ends Sept 6.**

#### WASHINGTON

**National Gallery: A Century of Modern Sculpture.** The Percy and Raymond Nasser Collection, contains major works by Rodin, Picasso, Matisse, Gabo, Giacometti, Ernst, Moore and Serra. Ends Jan 3.

**Hirschhorn Museum: One of the Chicago contemporary primitivists whose repeated scenes make evocative images has his first major east coast retrospective with 40 paintings and four painted constructions. Ends Oct 18.**

## THE ARTS

### Theatre

#### LONDON

**Antony and Cleopatra (Olivier):** Peter Hall's best production for the National Theatre he leaves in 1988 brings this great but notoriously difficult play to brilliant life, with Judi Dench and Anthony Hopkins as best-loved lovers on the brink of old age. Dench is angry, witty and ultimately moving. Best of the rest at the NT is Michael Gambon giving his finest ever performance as Arthur Miller's doomed longshoreman in A View from the Bridge. Juliet Stevenson in a fine revival of Lorca's Yerma and David Hare's production of King Lear. Hopkins, a massive gnarled oak, which gathers force and more friends as it continues in the repertoire (226 222).

**The Phantom of the Opera (Star Majesty):** Spectacular but emotionally nutritional new musical by Andrew Lloyd Webber emphasising the romance in Laroux's 1911 novel. Happens in a wonderful Paris Opera ambience designed by Maria Bjornson. Hal Prince's alert, affectionate production contains a superb central performance by Michael Crawford. A new, mercurial and palpable hit. (339 2244, CC 379 6131/240 7200).

**The Balcony (Bachman):** Sadly dated and heavy-handed opening to the RSC's Genet retrospective, not helping to fight suspicions that the RSC, certainly in London, is stretched way beyond its creative capacities. Terry Hands directs, Farrar's set looks like a cheap pink brothel and the actors, a dull lot, clump around on high boots in big baggy costumes. (428 0785).

**Follies (Shakespeare):** Stunning revival, directed by Mike Ockrent and designed by Maria Bjornson, of Sondheim's 1971 musical in which poisoned marriages nearly undermine an old burlesque re-union in a doomed theatre. Four new songs, improved look by James Goldman. Cast led by Dolores Gray, Julie McKenzie, Diana Rigg, Daniel Massey. All good. (379 3339).

**Melon (Haymarket):** Alan Bates predictably good in new Simon Gray, clumsily directed by Christopher Morahan, about a jealous publisher viewed in flashback from a psychiatric ward after a breakdown. Menopausal rantings, not vintage Gray. (390 0832).

**Serious Money (Wyndham):** Transfer from Royal Court of Caryl Churchill's slick City comedy for champagne-swilling yuppies: how the Big Bang led to class tumult and barrow-boy dealings on the Stock Exchange. Hot and vivid, but new cast deemed less good. (330 3028, CC 379 6565).

### Opera and Ballet

#### LONDON

**London Palladium: Ballet Theatre** Français with Rudolf Nureyev dancing each night in a Diaghilev season.

**A Small Family Business (Olivier):** Brilliant new Alan Ayckbourn play about Britain on the fiddle in greedy times, selling out to foreigners and keeping it simultaneously in the family. A comedy thriller on the large scale. Ayckbourn's own production is led majestically by Michael Gambon. Best of the NT remains King Lear and Antony and Cleopatra in the Olivier. A View from the Bridge in the Cottesloe. The new Brian Friel adaptation of Turpin's Fathers and Sons is decent but dull in the Lyttelton. (228 2223).

#### NETHERLANDS

**Amsterdam, Stadschouwburg.** The English Speaking Theatre of Amsterdam in Barrie Keef's trilogy Barbarians directed by David Swinson (all week except Sun and Mon). (242 311).

#### NEW YORK

**Fences (44th Street):** August Wilson hit a home-run, this year's Pulitzer Prize, with James Earl Jones taking the powerful lead role of an old baseball player raising a family in an industrial city in the 1950s, trying to improve it but dogged by his own failings. (212-1211).

**Cats (Winter Garden):** Still a sellout. Trevor Nunn's production of T.S. Eliot's children's poetry set to trendy music is visually startling and choreographically sublime, but classic only in the sense of a rather stiff and overblown idea of theatricality. (238 8262).

**Steel Street (Majestic):** An immodest celebration of the heyday of Broadway in the '30s incorporates gems from the original film like *Shuffle Off to Buffalo* with the appropriately trash and horny brooding by a large chorus line. (877 9020).

**A Chorus Line (Shubert):** The longest-running musical ever in America has not only supported Joseph Papp's Public Theater for eight years but also updated the musical genre with its backstage story in which the songs are used as auditions rather than emotions. (238 6200).

**La Cage aux Folles (Palace):** With some tuneful Jerry Herman songs, Harvey Fierstein's adaptation of the French film manages, barely, to capture the feel of the sweet and hilarious original between high-kicking and gaudy chorus numbers. (379 2626).

**I'm Not Rappaport (Booth):** The Tony's best play of 1986 won on the strength of its word-of-mouth popu-

larity for the two oldsters on Central Park benches who bicker uproariously about life past, present and future, with a funny plot to match. (238 6200).

**Big River (O'Neill):** Roger Miller's music rescues this sedentary version of Huck Finn's adventures down the Mississippi, which walked off with many 1965 Tony awards almost by default. (240 0223).

**Les Misérables (Broadway):** Led by Colin Wilkinson repeating his West End role as Jean Valjean, the magnificent spectacle of Victor Hugo's majestic sweep of history and pathos brings to Broadway lessons in pageantry and drama, if not strict adherence to its original source. (239 6200).

#### WASHINGTON

**Satchmo (Opera House):** New musical based on the life and music of Louis Armstrong opens. Kennedy Center (354 3770).

#### CHICAGO

**Sunday in the Park with George (Goodman):** Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine's Pulitzer Prize winning musical based on suggestions about the life of artist and Georges Seurat stars John Herrera as the artist and Paula Scrabano as his lover Dot, directed by Michael Maglio. Ends Aug 18 (443 3800).

#### TOKYO

**Les Misérables.** After London and New York, now Tokyo and the Japanese version of the Tony-award winning musical. The cast was hand-picked by the creative team of producer Cameron Mackintosh (from an astounding 11,500 hopefuls), then trained for nine months in a special 'academy' and rehearsed by director John Caird. Costumes, set, sound, lighting have been supervised by the respective original designer Shown in from London. Toho's Les Misérables is a triumph. The best production of a Western musical in Japan, it differs little from the original London version. Convincing and moving, this top-quality production shows what can be achieved with proper casting and training. Sponsored by the cosmetics company, Shiseido. Imperial Theatre, near Ginza. (361 7777).

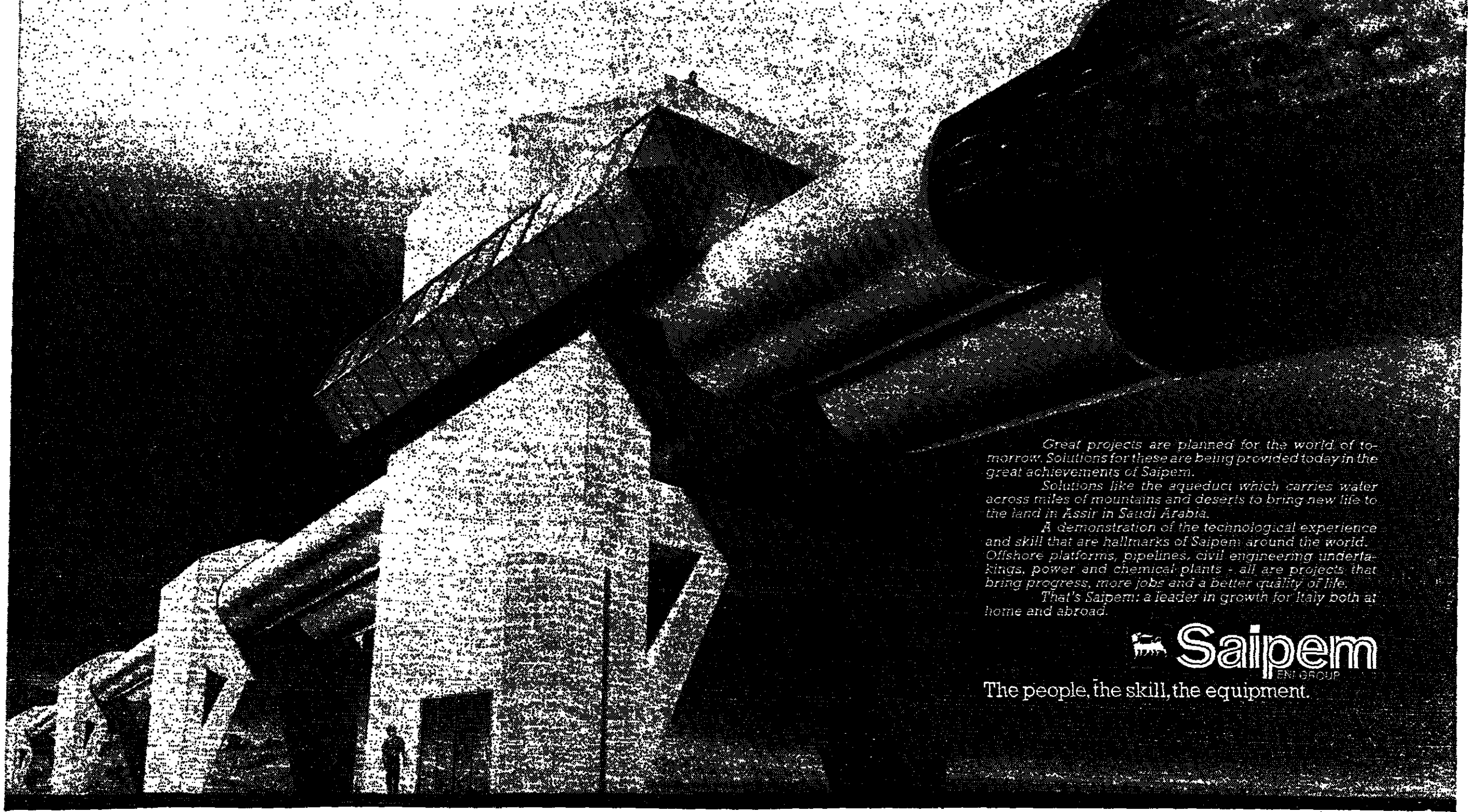
**Annie.** The Japanese version of the Tony-award winning musical by Charles Strouse and Martin Chamin. Stars Shiori Kanno as Annie with Ichiro Zaitsu, Mitsuo Jun and the Shepherd dog Sandy. The Arima Theatre (Tue, Wed, Thur). (239 1837).

#### JAPAN

**Japan Folkloric Art Dance Troupe:** Programme consists of traditional dances from the various regions of Japan, in spectacular, colourful and highly skilled presentation. English programme notes. Yubin Chokin Hall, Shiba Park (Thur). (562 9171).

Continued on Page 11

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## THE ARTS

Cinema/Nigel Andrews

## Tragedy shot through with wit and lyricism

Comrades directed by Bill Douglas  
*Good Morning Babylon* directed by  
 Paolo and Vittorio Taviani  
*Lethal Weapon* directed by Richard  
 Donner  
*Power* directed by Sidney Lumet

*Comrades* is the first full-length feature from Scottish director Bill Douglas, creator of that harshly poetic trilogy of autobiographical films that began with *My Childhood*. The world often sits by waiting to pounce on artists — whether novelists, playwrights or movie-makers — as soon as they hatch from their first phase of disguised or undisguised self-portraiture. And *Comrades*, which tells the story of the Tolpuddle martyrs from their clash with English law in the 1830s to their seven-year deportation sentence in Australia, shows enough signs of imperfect hatching to make it likely that many critics will shake their heads and proclaim, "Ah, what a pity his own story is told after all."

But the film is one of daring breadth (it is three hours long) and only in the second, Australian half does it go significantly wrong. Here Douglas sets his six mother heroes down in Botany Bay — propelled thither by the Victorian bosses and big-wigs back in England who refused to recognise their right to form a union and convicted them of administering "illegal oaths" — and then he seems to have no clear idea of what to do with them. A diaspora of stories ensues. One of the Brits works in a chain-gang under a beating sun and the gang takes time off brutally to kill their guard. Other Brits become portable slaves for tobacco- and cotton-plantations, including Arthur Dignam and Vanessa Redgrave. Others still mooch about the outback wondering when their sentences will be up or if a reprieve is in the offing.

Uprooted from Britain.



Scene from "Good Morning Babylon"

Douglas's skills seem to lose all their muscle and purchase. The film becomes a slackly generic melodrama of injustice, indistinguishable from one of those sweat-and-shakes TV mini-series about Australia's convict past. But in the film's first half, set in Britain, there is wit and detail, toughness and compassion in the chronicle of the early labour movement. Douglas interweaves the different stories of hardship and grievance: the haggling over "eight shillings a week," the back-breaking spade work under shroud-grey winter skies, the daily crusts of bread, or hope, begged from a backdoor.

And he interweaves through these a magical leitmotif, in the protean person of Alex Norton as "the Lanternist." Playing a baker's dozen of different roles, he pops up with chubby face and penny-bright eyes as a sort of pre-historian of cinema. The visual games and gags with which he tours towns and villages (a silhouette show, a peepshow, a diorama) cast a retrospective glow of magic back from the age of movies into a

world not yet graced by their molten fantasies. This puckish, mutable figure is contrasted with the monolithic harshness of English society, the English class system and—dominating all—the English landscape. Douglas and cameraman Gale Tattersall photograph the fields and moors with bleak power, curved and reared up against the skies as if man's planet were small and lonely enough to show the Earth's curvature in any vista.

The film falters only when Douglas asserts his own vision; or when it deserts him in scenes and characters that owe more to movies and history books than to his own experience. The Have-nots bring out in him an insight and sympathy that are never cloying or sentimental. But the Haves are mostly hand-me-down clichés: Robert Stephens marling like a Dickensian ogre as the can't-pay-more-won't-pay-more landowner; Murray Melvin and Arthur Dignam as epicene dandies toying with the lower classes like cats with mice; and James Fox wheeled on for yet

another of his portraits of weary (and wearying) patrician disdain. At these points a tough-grained tragedy of human manners, shot through with wit and lyricism, turns into a tuppence-coloured political puppet-show. The best of *Comrades* deserves better—promises better for Douglas's future films.

*Good Morning Babylon* is another demonstration that a film's quality can fluctuate dramatically according to how close or far the material is from the maker's own experience. Directors Paolo and Vittorio Taviani (of *Padre Padrone* and *Kooz*) have seized on a marvelous truth-based story idea—the tale of two Italian brothers who found fame in Hollywood by designing the giant elephants for D. W. Griffith's *Babylon* set in *Intolerance*—and set about turning it into a gilded fable about the early days of cinema.

Apart from a handful of US location shots, the film was made entirely in Italy, and its best scenes take place in a

sunlit Arcadian clime that could equally be early Hollywood or medieval Umbria. The brothers (Vincent Spano and Joaquin de Almeida) belong to a family of cathedral restorers; they are grudgingly despatched to the New World by their stern father (Gennaro Antonucci) when business fails; and when they later get married on the set of *Intolerance*, who should turn up but Dad, who promptly has a verbal duel with D. W. Griffith about the relative importance of cathedrals and movies.

Whenever this magnetic patriarch and his two sons (who are surely alter egos for the Tavianis themselves) take centre screen, the film glows with life. And two sequences alone remind us that we are in the hands of major film-makers. One is the brothers' sea crossing, filmed as a wordless, fantastical shorthand of sliding wine glasses, black-furled smokestacks and rearing ocean waves glided by sunsets. The other, equally surreal, has the two brothers deep in the California countryside, one chasing a pair of cygnets, the other a river, the other conjuring up flashback images of his father from the sparkle of a wine glass.

But elsewhere the film is almost scuppered by two directly written "female interest" roles. Greta Scacchi and Désirée Becker play, with many a giggle and snigger, the two aspiring American starlets who marry our heroes. And Charles Dance's Griffith struggles manfully but none too convincingly with an American accent. (Could they not have got an American?) In short, whenever the Tavianis put on their Hawaiian shirts and fedoras and pretend to be Americans looking at Americans, the film's sound of phoniness rings loud in a movie whose best moments are the silent, the poetic, the surreal or the unabashedly Italianate.

\* You're not just trying to draw psycho pension, you really

are crazy," says black policeman Danny Glover to his hot-headed white junior Mel Gibson in *Lethal Weapon*. Ah yes. We live in the age of nutty policemen, especially in America. Every good cop worth his badge is a vigilante at heart, assuring citizens of their right to remain silent while beating their heads to a pulp. If necessary, to encourage that state.

In this headlong crime thriller directed by Richard (Superman) Donner, Vietnam is dragged into the mélange as well. For undercover cop Mr Gibson is a traumatised Vietnam veteran. And since he has recently lost his wife to boot, he has to find someone else to boot. This turns out to be the criminal he meets. He kicks them, slaps their faces and pokes them in the eye. If the mood takes him, he also screams at them—in his strange accent which is that of an Australian actor trying to persuade us that he was born and bred in LA.

So the long day wears on, extended by a virulently daft plot about a mad ex-general (Mitchell Ryan) and his private army running a citywide heroin racket. There are guns, helicopters, car chases and torture sessions. Most of all, there is the sense of a law-and-order world running out of control and a film industry eagerly trying to follow suit.

One might, not mind, on the other hand, if most of the main characters were a bit more interesting. The two starlets, the two aspiring American starlets who marry our heroes, and Charles Dance's Griffith struggles manfully but none too convincingly with an American accent. (Could they not have got an American?) In short, whenever the Tavianis put on their Hawaiian shirts and fedoras and pretend to be Americans looking at Americans, the film's sound of phoniness rings loud in a movie whose best moments are the silent, the poetic, the surreal or the unabashedly Italianate.

\* You're not just trying to draw psycho pension, you really

## Ermione/Teatro Rossini. Pesaro

William Weaver

The Rossini Opera Festival in Pesaro is really under no obligation to produce, every summer, an unknown masterpiece for our admiration. But since it has done just that for the past two years—with *Il ruggio e Reims* in 1985 and *Bianca e Falliero* in 1986—it was logical for this year's audience to expect the same kind of wondrous magic to happen with the revival of *Ermione*. Somehow, this time, the trick didn't quite work, though the performance certainly extended our knowledge of Rossini, introduced us to an opera of great interest, and raised a number of questions about Rossini performance.

Actually *Ermione* was not exactly unknown. A dim concert reading in Siena a decade ago made it clear that the opera has some fascinating qualities (discussed also in Richard Osborne's valuable study of the composer); a second, more recent concert performance and a recording have made the piece still more accessible.

No one could really quarrel with the casting: Montserrat Caballé in the title-role, Marilyn Horne as Andromaca, the tenors Chris Merritt and Rockwell Blake as Pirro and Orsino. The secondary roles in this opera are also demanding, and they were well-assigned. But somehow sparks failed to fly. The fault may have been, to some extent, the insensitive conducting of Gustav Kuhn, indulgent to the singers, indeed even self-indulgent as the maestro seemed to be relaxing and enjoying himself in the lyrical scenes, forgetting that they, too, must have momentum. But the great stars themselves seemed bent more on sounds than on sense: high notes were abundant and not always pleasant to hear (Merritt's shrill bleats were painful at times), but more seriously there was no sense of cause and effect, of relationship among the singers. Last year, the intensity of the Ricciardi-Horne scenes was unforgettable. In *Ermione* the confrontation between the two heroines seemed strangely tame.

Rossini, in 1819 at the height of his Italian career, was clearly experimenting, trying out a different kind of drama. Based on Racine's *Andromaque*, Andrea Leone Tottola's workmanlike libretto is anything but conventional. *Ermione* is a play about a play, the story of a woman who loves Pirro, who loves Andromaca, who loves only her dead husband and her small son, for whose life she is justly apprehensive. Since no love is required there are no love duets, much of the music is in the same dramatic line. Andromaca has some tender maternal moments (and Horne, here, was totally committed to the music, at her very best), and

Orsino has a splendid entrance aria, preceded by some skilful "crazy" music (Blake carried the neurosis a bit too far); but for the most part the characters are either sung successfully or warded off unwanted affection.

A more penetrating staging might have enlivened the performance, but even an inventive director like Roberto De Simone is up against difficulties with these artists, who are, well, less than agile. They spent considerable time sitting down; and when they did move, the awkward sets by Enrico Job did not help (it was cruel to make Caballé climb down so many steps). Job's costumes were a puzzle: chasubles and tents for the principals, all beswagged with beaded ropes like the curtains of a Mediterranean café, and Napoleonic court dress for the chorus. Visually this *Ermione* had no character. Having voiced these reservations, one can only add that the opera invites further hearing (and further production); and Pesaro was absolutely right to revive it.

Fewer qualms about the festival's other opera production: a bright new staging of *Orsino*, by a director in the Sala Petrucci, who has a fine voice and a fine sense of the opera's direction seemed now and then over-busy (all those cowering servants!), but the virtue of coherence, it had a line, recognisable intentions. Musically, the performance was close to impeccable. The violinist Salvatore, who has lately been doing more and more conducting, led the bright young Orchestra Giovanile Italiana with the tip of his baton: all was fresh and fluid, never rushed, never sagging. The same orchestra played creditably also in the *Ermione*, but here the skirling winds and the smooth strings seemed to be enjoying themselves, like us in the audience.

Luciana Sorra is an old-fashioned, crystalline coloratura (the Pagliughi school) and she has a great sense of humour along with her telling accuracy. She and the veteran baritone Claudio Desderi kept things moving, though Desderi never sacrificed his warm singing to the clowning required by Ponnelle. Raul Gimenez and Patrick Rafferty, Pesaro regulars, were delightful as the rival swains, and smaller roles were intelligently filled by Luciana D'Intino and Ernesto Gavazzi. Omissions had been the order of the evening at the *Ermione* premiere (though there was also some vociferous, organised opposition to Caballé); here the omissions seemed more spontaneous and perhaps even more desired.



Chris Merritt and Marilyn Horne

## BBC Symphony/Albert Hall

David Murray

Wednesday's Prom was conducted by Bernard Haitink, and so everything about it was well-planned and reliable. Haitink is perhaps experimenting with a new, light touch: the opening movement of Mozart's Symphony no. 29, "Allegro moderato," after all—positively scampered along, and the Minuet was so excitingly speedy (though Haitink relaxed for the Trio) as to seem a quite different dance. Some of the humorous touches in the score shot by unremarked, but the Finale sparkled.

It was curious to see the orchestral reinforcements trooping on for Ravel's restrained *Shéhérazade* songs, nor, in deference to his singer, did he did Haitink ever give them their heads. The brief but imposing Rimskian breakers in "Asia" were only sea-swallows. Miss Lott was predictably subtle and teasing in that song and in "La Fête enchantée" (and predictably cautious with the respective climaxes on "baine" and "joie"), rapt and then gracefully disappointed in "L'Indif-

ferent." If Haitink allowed her too much drawing-out of the recitative passages, pour interrompre le conte avec art! indeed—he always captured the essential pulse in movement and the iridescent textures. It was a performance that invited happy surrender. We had Stravinsky's *Petrushka* in its full 1911 panoply, though Haitink again kept his forces on a close rein, and preferred a crisp tread in many places where peasant stamping is the usual thing. The efficient solo piano was not prominent (barely audible in the "Danse russe," though the microphones may have picked it up for home listeners). Petrushka's solo scene was neatly shaped as a scene, so was the subsequent to-do in the Blackmore cell. The final Shrovetide Fair, excellent in parts, built to something less than the peak of exuberance one instinctively wants. The trumpets were problem-free—not something that can be counted upon—and the ballerinas in "baine" and "joie" were, in all, just a degree too polite.

## New production of 'Paride ed Elena' at Drottningholm

The summer season of performances at the Drottningholm Court Theatre, that miraculous 18th century gem at the palace across the waters from central Stockholm, has in the last few years been occupied mainly by the cycle of Mozart operas put on by a specially formed company under Arnold Östman, the Drottningholm music director. But for many years before Östman's name gained its celebrity, the Royal Opera of Stockholm also took up summer occupancy of the theatre; and the practice has not been discontinued. This summer, for instance, the middle part of the schedule was filled by Göran Tronfeldt's new productions of *Tylo* and *Figaro*, conducted by Östman; and, on either side of it, in early June and late August, a new Royal Opera production of Gluck's *Paride ed Elena* was offered to mark the Gluck Bicentenary.

The Royal Opera have already built up an admirable record of Gluck performance: here the original version of *Orfeo* (with Kerstin Meyer and Elisabeth Späterström), *Alceste*, and both *Iphegenie operas*. Now *Paride*, most neglected of the important Gluck operas, the one most seldom given on stage, has joined the list. (Sweden, ever since the first performance of *Orfeo* in 1773, has remained a country notably hospitable to his operas—Gustaf III, that most civilised of kings, was a admirer, and so was J. M. Kraus, Sweden's first important composer.)

Purely as a reading of the opera, *Paride ed Elena* seems to witness an 18th century theatrical vision springing to life, have been sung more than once on this page in recent years, so I shan't repeat them; but in particular, the speed of some change afforded by the original stage machinery—the sets (antique prospect, court interior, woodland scene etc.) were drawn from a stock of modern copies—was a delight in itself, and made for an urgency of stage momentum which the musical direction would have done well to imitate.

*Paride ed Elena* (1770), third (after *Orfeo* and *Alceste*) of the so-called Reform operas produced for Vienna, was the least popular and successful of the three. One sees why: for all the ceremonial grandeur of the choral tableaux it is an uncomfortably plain tale, essentially an intimate love-story devoted to the protracted wooing of Helen by Paris. Cupid,

disguised as Erasto, plays an important Pandarus part; in Act 5 Pallas Athena intervenes with dire warnings of future tragedy; but every episode is a reflection of the central theme—the power at once sublime and destructive of sexual love—and it is followed through without let-up, in music at once lyrically radiant and stripped to bareness. The dramatic interest falls directly on the loveliest Cretan youth and the proud Spartan princess; every-

thing depends on them, particularly on Paris, whose apostrophe to his "douce ardor," placed almost at the start of the opera, provides the motto of the whole work.

One of the leading singers of the Stockholm company, the mezzo-soprano Sylvia Lindstrand, had been engaged for the role, at least, not a tenor (the role, originally written for a soprano castrato, has in modern times been the victim of a common right-wrong-octave error of casting). But her voice is apparently going through a difficult period—much of the music, including "O del mio dolce ardor," had to be transposed down at least

a tone or more, and almost all of it, whether lowered in pitch or not, cost her painful struggle with the line. It was probably for this reason that the high-lying "Spigasse amate," another of Paris's ravishing love-outbursts at the start of the opera, was cut—although as almost equally infuriating truncations were also practised on portions of the score not affecting Paris, it's hard to be certain. The woolliness of the singer's tone

and emission made one aware, by default, that Paris is one of the most exacting of operatic roles—exposed, unremitting, it's hard to be certain. The work as a whole.

Helen, by contrast, was well assigned to Brit-Marie Aruhn (whose crystalline soprano won a deserved success as a Covent Garden Zerbinetta some years ago, but of whom we have heard nothing since then). The line was pure, confident, trimly edged; the Act 4 aria in which Helen's resolve alternates between firmness and passionate wavering was the single passage where she sprang to life with a genuine Gluckian vitality. The

other parts—Erasto-Cupid (Iwa Benson), Pallas Athena (Carina Morling)—were modestly touched in; the dances were surprisingly full in presentation, considering the cuts elsewhere, but as staged by Bengt Peterson and choreographed by Regina Beck-Friis the production as a whole showed a dependence on 18th century gesture that was inquisitively abhorred and digested, with lots of capswirling and hand-flourishes, little conviction of style.

The conductor, Thomas Schuchback, laid a leaden hand on the score. He had not taught his singers to deliver accompanied recitative (in which the opera is abundant), with any theatrical vigour; in defiance of the wonderfully intimate relationship of stage, orchestra pit and audience, he allowed the simple colour strokes to go for little or longed for the use of period instruments to mitigate the heaviness of rhythmic tread. Altogether, it was hard not to think of this as an opportunity squandered—yet, for all that, I'm not sorry to have had the experience of it.

Dotted all about the greater Stockholm area there are, it appears, beautifully preserved court theatres ready to be put into service for summer musical and theatrical performance. At Ulriksdal to the north of the city, a lakeside residence smaller than Drottningholm, more chateau than palace,

became one of the favoured leisure haunts of Queen Lovisa Ulrika (Frederick the Great's sister and Gustaf III's mother). Confidence, the Ulriksdal theatre—even more intimate than Drottningholm, hardly less delightful to visit—has in recent seasons played host to opera productions and concerts under the direction of the singer Kjertsin Dellert.

A visit to Confidence last week was timed to catch an 18th-century style pastiche of speech and song, *Play for a Queen*, devised to recount the history of the house. Voltaire's verse drama *Alceste*, excerpts of Handel's *Pastor fido*, and snatches of Frederick's own compositions were accompanied into the text; Dellert herself spoke and sang Mme Duvaland, the French actress-leader of the first theatrical troupe to have occupied Confidence (the 18th-century Swedish court was famously francophile).

It was all a little coy, knowing, obvious, long-winded; but it was affectionately fashioned and it afforded a happy introduction to the theatre. You can hardly take two steps on Scandinavian woodland paths, it seems, without stumbling on bushes of wild berries piercingly sweet and succulent—kept one in indulgent mood.

## Arts Week

Continued from Page 10

## Music

## LONDON

London Sinfonietta conducted by Diego Marston with soloists: Machaut, Burlesque, Monteverdi, Kagel and Berio. Queen Elizabeth Hall (Mon). (928 3191).

BBC Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Edward Downes with Robert Tear, tenor, Delius, Richard Rodney Bennett and Rachmaninov. Royal Albert Hall (Mon). (589 8212).

Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Owain Arwel Hughes with György Pauk, violin, Rossini, Grieg, Bruch, Beethoven. Barbican Hall (Tue). (558 9891).

BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by David Atherton. Bartok and Shostakovich. Royal Albert Hall (Tue).

Israel Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Zubin Mehta with Shlomo Mintz, violin, Brahms and Mahler. Barbican Hall (Wed).

BBC Philharmonic Orchestra with chorus and soloists, conducted by Edward Downes. Tchaikovsky and Borodin. Royal Albert Hall (Wed).

Israel Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Zubin Mehta. Bruchner. Royal Albert Hall (Thur).

English Chamber Orchestra conducted by Edmondo Camesi with Emanuel Ax, piano and Jose Luis Garcia, violin. Mozart, Beethoven and Vivaldi. Barbican Hall (Thur).

## PARIS

Ensemble Gilles Binchois conducted by Dominique Vellard. Cathedral Vocal Music. Ecole Notre-Dame de Paris (Mon, 8.30pm). Saint-Severin Church.

Anna Stalla Schie, piano. One Hour with Gershwin (Tue, 7pm). Auditorium des Halles.

Ensemble Erwartung conducted by Bernard Desgranges. Hommage to St John Perse and Blaise Cendrars with Durey and Milhaud (Wed, 8.30pm). Auditorium des Halles.

Orchestre Français des Jeunes conducted by Emmanuel Krivine, Gerard Cause, alto; Debussy, Bartok (Thur, 8.30pm). Salle Pleyel.

All the above are part of the Paris Festival Estival (4804 9801).

## CHICAGO

Ravinia Festival: The Tokyo String Quartet. Beethoven cycle (Tue, Wed, Thur). Highland Park (728 4422).

## JAPAN

Japan Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Ken-Ichiro Kobayashi with Mariko Senju, violin, Rimsky-Korsakov, Saint-Saens, Massenet, Sarasate and Ravel. Suntory Hall, Akasaka (Thur). (237 990; 980 6060).

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**Arts Week**

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**Music**

**LONDON**

London Sinfonietta conducted by Diego Marston with soloists: Machaut, Burlesque, Monteverdi, Kagel and Berio. Queen Elizabeth Hall (Mon). (928 3191).

BBC Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Edward Downes with Robert Tear, tenor, Delius, Richard Rodney Bennett and Rachmaninov. Royal Albert Hall (Mon). (589 8212).

Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Owain Arwel Hughes with György Pauk, violin, Rossini, Grieg, Bruch, Beethoven. Barbican Hall (Tue). (558 9891).

BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by David Atherton. Bartok and Shostakovich. Royal Albert Hall (Tue).

Israel Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Zubin Mehta with Shlomo Mintz, violin, Brahms and Mahler. Barbican Hall (Wed).

BBC Philharmonic Orchestra with chorus and soloists, conducted by Edward Downes. Tchaikovsky and Borodin. Royal Albert Hall (Wed).

Israel Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Zubin Mehta. Bruchner. Royal Albert Hall (Thur).

English Chamber Orchestra conducted by Edmondo Camesi with Emanuel Ax, piano and Jose Luis Garcia, violin. Mozart, Beethoven and Vivaldi. Barbican Hall (Thur).

**PARIS**

Ensemble Gilles Binchois conducted by Dominique Vellard. Cathedral Vocal Music. Ecole Notre-Dame de Paris (Mon, 8.30pm). Saint-Severin Church.

Anna Stalla Schie, piano. One Hour with Gershwin (Tue, 7pm). Auditorium des Halles.

Ensemble Erwartung conducted by Bernard Desgranges. Hommage to St John Perse and Blaise Cendrars with Durey and Milhaud (Wed, 8.30pm). Auditorium des Halles.

Orchestre Français des Jeunes conducted by Emmanuel Krivine, Gerard Cause, alto; Debussy, Bartok (Thur, 8.30pm). Salle Pleyel.

All the above are part of the Paris Festival Estival (4804 9801).

**CHICAGO**

Ravinia Festival: The Tokyo String Quartet. Beethoven cycle (Tue, Wed, Thur). Highland Park (728 4422).

**JAPAN**

Japan Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Ken-Ichiro Kobayashi with Mariko Senju, violin, Rimsky-Korsakov, Saint-Saens, Massenet, Sarasate and Ravel. Suntory Hall, Akasaka (Thur). (237 990; 980 6060).

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## TECHNOLOGY

## Add strontium to the warm recipe

W. YAO LIANG, of Cambridge University's department of physics, was visiting the General Electric Company (GEC) of the UK last Friday in the hope of netting a research arrangement for his work on superconductivity. Right in the middle of things, his host, Karl A. Gehring, received a telephone call from Tokyo: colleagues there had heard about a new material with revolutionary implications.

Allegedly, the substance would superconduct - that is, transmit electrical current with almost no loss of power - at room temperature without any of the cooling systems required by previously known materials. The two men immediately shared the formula with Liang, and the scientist zipped back to his laboratory to bake up a batch.

"I knew he would go away and try to grow that crystal on his own," says Gehring, who heads GEC's superconductivity programme. "So little is known about these materials, it is quite possible we would succeed and they wouldn't, or they'd come up with a particular technique and succeed and we wouldn't."

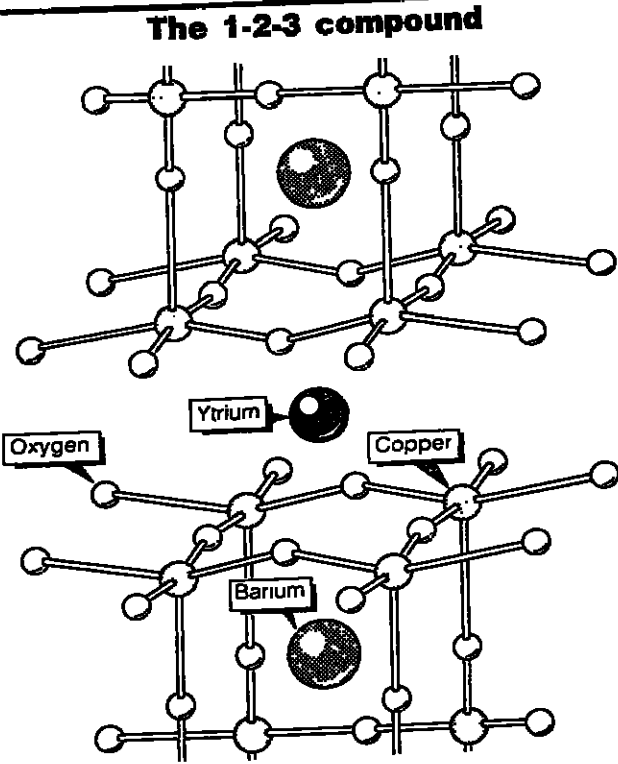
At least at this uncommercial stage of development, Gehring feels that "it's important we spread information around."

In initial tests still under way, Liang and his team have not been able to confirm the findings of the Japanese company, Electro Technical Laboratory (ETL), which has a recipe for the metallic material that adds a dash of strontium to the proven "warm" superconductors of copper, oxygen, yttrium and barium.

But to Liang, the incident reveals the sort of co-operative attitude that he and colleagues know is invaluable to Cambridge's strategy, as it competes with companies and institutions worldwide to unlock the secrets of superconductor technology. This research holds great promise for a variety of commercial applications, from power generation to low-cost medical scanners, smaller computers and energy storage.

With £3.5m of equipment, an established team linking five departments and a targeted effort to set up industrial collaboration with GEC, Oxford Instruments, IBM and others, Cambridge is at the forefront of superconductor research in the UK.

One of its scientists, Jan E. Evetts, is already anxious to move beyond the sharing phase to protect any possible prop-



Jane Rippeteau reports on the search for a 'room temperature' superconductor

etary edge. He and colleagues have so far filed for six patents, ranging from the basic physics of the materials to designs for superconducting wires that could be used by industry.

Evetts says that within days of one filing, a Japanese trading company, that he will not name, contacted him offering research funds in exchange for patent rights. "As soon as they realised I had intellectual property, they came offering money," a few English companies expressed interest, too, but the approach was "different."

However, Liang says he found a more positive response from British industry, at least concerning small research grants. "The situation is so new. Some companies have come around and asked if we wanted money," says Liang. One has provided a £7,000 to support a post-doctoral student.

And in March, when the UK Science and Engineering Research Council (SERC) had overspent and so froze funding, Liang recalls a spur-of-the-moment decision to call Oxford In-

struments, the highly-successful UK company that is the world's leading supplier of conventional superconducting magnets.

While big companies usually have cumbersome procedures for grant applications, "at Oxford, you are dealing with a man," says Liang. He soon had £10,000 in funds, enough to tide over his crystal-grower and buy some equipment.

Although superconducting materials are in use today, they require expensive cooling systems to chill them almost to absolute zero (0 degrees Kelvin, or -273 Celsius). A burst of discoveries this year turned up new compounds working at 93 degrees K, which need only cheap liquid nitrogen to cool them. Attention shot naturally to the revolutionary prospect of room temperature superconductors.

Most of the warm superconductors follow a formula that scientists call the 1-2-3 compounds (see illustration). That stands for one atom of yttrium, two of barium and three copper, plus varying amounts of oxygen. Scientists do not yet fully understand how and why this metal oxide works as a superconductor. These questions are

the main focus of research today because once scientists know why a certain material works, they can begin resolving the technical barriers to commercial application.

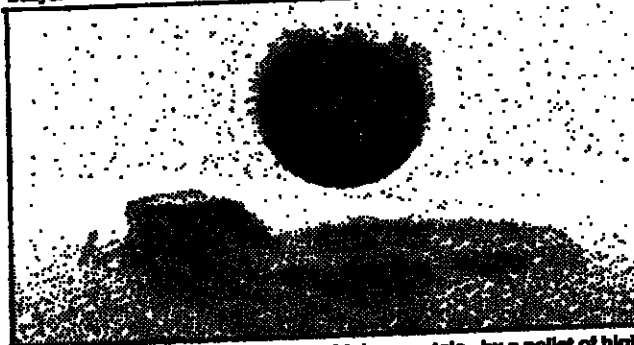
One problem is the highly unstable behavior of oxygen in the compounds. "Oxygen goes in and out of them like a sieve," says Eckardt Salje, lecturer in the university's department of earth sciences. As a result, the materials lose their superconducting punch over a matter of months and revert to normal conductors, or worse, to insulators.

According to Liang, this problem is evident with the ETL material, which lasted just a day before losing its superconductivity. However, the new recipe gives important clues. "Strontium has a different size from barium," notes Liang. Because of that, the copper atoms are pushed further apart, opening up the lattice framework of the crystal unit and allowing it to hold more oxygen.

"It's a step towards our understanding of the mechanism," he says.

Studies are costly and time-consuming, though. Salje has one £200,000 computer-controlled machine running constantly to analyse atomic structure at different temperatures, to try to understand why the oxygen blazes around the way it does. It takes two weeks just to get one sample, and five or six samples at several temperatures are needed.

Salje is chairman of Cambridge's High Temperature Superconductivity Group, which links his department with other relevant disciplines in chemistry, physics, materials science and metallurgy, and engineering. The group involves about 30 Cambridge staff members and post-doctoral students, and about 20 visiting scientists. But, of these, fewer than 10 are able to work full-time on superconductor studies, according to Salje.



Levitation of a magnet - coated with ice crystals - by a pellet of high temperature superconductor standing proud in liquid nitrogen

## Good news for oyster lovers

BIOCHEMICAL research in the US has provided some mouth-watering news for lovers of oysters. Scientists believe they have hit on a way of ridding the shellfish of an unpleasant disease called bonamiasis, which has threatened to decimate their numbers in Europe.

The work is being done at a marine science laboratory in Sequim, Washington, run by Battelle, the contract research company, in the studies, paid for by the US Department of Energy, scientists have looked at the way a parasite, known as bonamia ostreae, brings on the disease by invading an oyster's blood cells and destroying its immune system.

A large proportion of the oyster population has been wiped out in France, the Netherlands, Britain, Spain and Ireland.

Battelle's scientists in Washington, where oyster cultivation is a big industry, have analysed how the disease starts and spreads, and are breeding oysters which appear resistant to it.

Ultimately, they hope to incorporate genetic material from the resistant shellfish in the tissue of the European variety. Scientists think it may be possible to build up large stocks of oysters which are unlikely to catch the disease and which can thrive all the way to the dinner table.

## A shot in the dark

A SMALL laser device promises to make life easier for both soldiers and TV crews. The system, made by Inmatronic, a British company, clips on to a gun or a TV camera, enabling precise aiming in the dark.

The £200 device emits a narrow beam with a range of up to 500yd. This results in a small red spot settling on the target. According to Inmatronic, the product is of a size previously considered unattainable - it is about 7in long and 1in wide. The company says it expects the system to see widespread use in the forces.

## Design for safety

WANT to be a cut above the rest when using a chainsaw? Still, of West Germany, has come out with a range of clothes which it says should be standard garb for safety-conscious farmers and woodmen

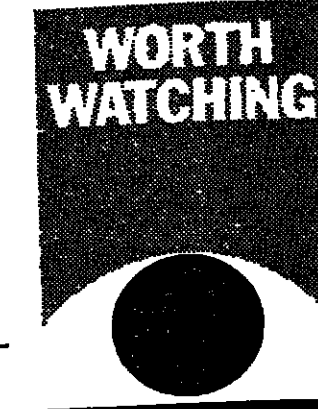
wielding such equipment. The clothes, a matching set of jacket, trousers and leggings, are stitched together from 10 layers of loose polyester fibres, sandwiched between an outer waterproof covering and a cotton lining. If the clothing becomes caught in the saw, the fibres act like a brake, stopping the machinery in a fraction of a second.

Stihl has moved into clothing for chainsaw operators as a sideline to turning out the machine.

## Emergency service

IN THE UK, International Computers (ICL) is to offer its customers a disaster recovery service using several major ICL machines on 'hot standby'.

The emergency computers are at the premises of Sherwood Locum, which has estab-



lished the service with extensive communications facilities in Salisbury. Subscribers to the service can use the machine room as if it were their own.

## Flat screen inches forward

A FINNISH company has unveiled the version of a flat-screen television, only 2 cm deep. Lohja, which has a UK base in Leeds, believes it is one of only a few companies outside Japan capable of making such a product.

The company adds the rider that it has yet to perfect the technology behind the system. It is not being manufactured as a commercial item because of problems in getting good quality colour on the television - the prototype version is black and white only - and in reducing production costs.

Lohja believes that the flat-screen device will come into

The good news is FERRANTI Selling technology

its own in the 1990s, first for use in computer equipment and then in domestic televisions.

## Help in the book hunt

MANCHESTER University, in the UK, is automating the records to its library of 3m books and journals. The computer system, to be installed by Crownet, will be especially helpful in keeping track of the university's collection of ancient books and manuscripts.

The system, which will be centred on an Amdahl computer, will link 1,000 terminals to which some 30,000 people can gain access around the university. By logging on to the system, researchers, staff and undergraduates will be able to quickly locate the books of their choice.

## The switch that defies water

PLASTICS technology has come to the aid of the specialised part of the offshore industry which uses underwater mechanisms to inspect pipelines.

Hydrovision, of Aberdeen in the UK, is using a switching unit made from advanced plastics to control an unmanned submarine. The switch is designed to operate while soaked with water.

Made by John McGivigan, of Glasgow, it is used to control a remotely operated vehicle that swims into position. Instructions are fed along a cable linking the vehicle to a mother vessel or the shore.

McGivigan says that the plastic switch contains a sealed membrane which allows it to be used on an open deck, where the system is in constant danger of becoming waterlogged by rain or sea spray.

CONTACTS: Sandwell UK 01 423 0184; Inu UK 074 771223; Sanyo UK 0462 20222; ICL London 788 7272; Lohja UK 0532 455645; John McGivigan 041 776 5261

PETER MARSH

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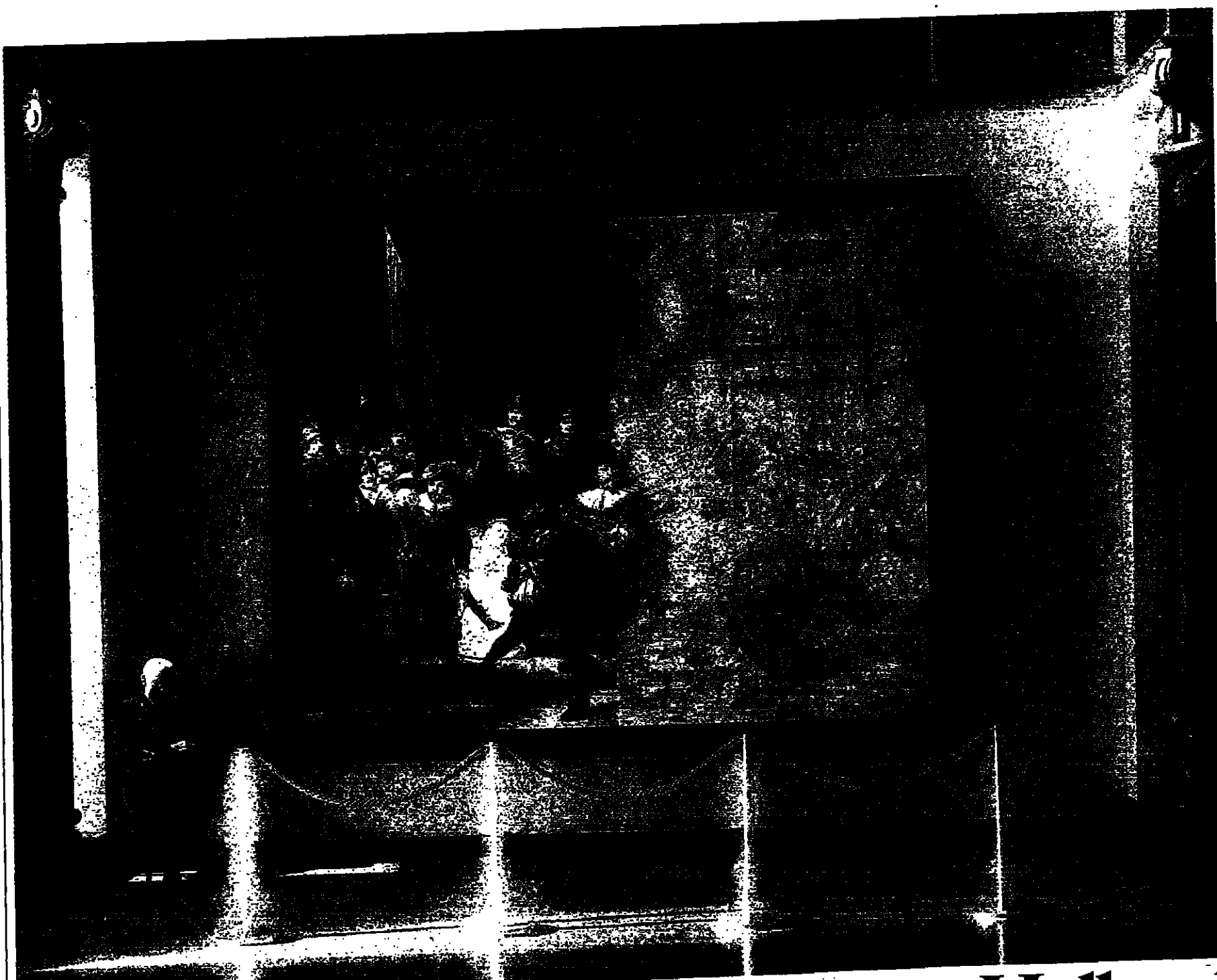
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Friday August 28 1987

## Clearer path to a summit

THE OFFER by Mr Kohl, the West German Chancellor, ultimately to scrap Bonn's ageing Pershing 1A missiles has removed the single biggest remaining obstacle to an agreement between the US and the Soviet Union on the worldwide elimination of intermediate-range nuclear forces. Barring last-minute hitches—always a possibility given the sensitive nature of arms control negotiations and the strained superpower relationship—President Reagan's optimism that a deal can be reached promptly appears to be justified.

The fundamental reasons for such optimism have long been evident, and have as much to do with Soviet and American domestic politics as with a desire to rid the world of nuclear weapons. His reputation seriously damaged by the Iran/Contra affair, President Reagan is anxious to bow out from the White House with a resounding foreign policy success to his credit. Mr Gorbachev, too, is badly in need of a concrete achievement on the world stage to add substance to his propaganda victories. He has made no secret of his belief that his planned economic reforms are heavily dependent on reducing expenditure on armaments.

Given these considerations, it was improbable that long and his conservative supporters in the Bonn government could hold out for very long against the combined forces of Washington and Moscow, backed by the Chancellor's own coalition partners. Once the US and the Soviet Union had agreed on the so-called "global double zero option" providing for the abolition of all nuclear missiles with a range of between 500 km and 5,000 km, Bonn's insistence on retaining its own 72 PLAs, with a range of 720 km, became virtually untenable. That was particularly true given the fact that their nuclear warheads remained under US control.

### Symbolic reminder

The Nato argument that the missiles in question could not be included in a bilateral US-Soviet agreement because they were "third country systems" always appeared an over-sensitised interpretation of a problem which was one of politics and strategy. Having been dragged into the argument by the "double zero option," which they and other European mem-

bers of Nato feared might lead to the weakening of the US nuclear shield over Europe, the Germans felt particularly vulnerable to the Warsaw Pact's superiority in conventional forces.

The PLAs, however, out-of-date they might be, were at least a symbolic reminder to Moscow that West Germany continued to have a medium-range nuclear capability in the event of a Warsaw Pact attack. Though unconvinced of the PLAs' military value, Washington and other Nato allies were unwilling to alienate Bonn any more than they had already. Mr Kohl's conversion to arms control orthodoxy has been achieved only progressively through discreet behind-the-scenes pressure and the exigencies of his own domestic political situation.

### Strategic gap

Even now, the principle that third country systems cannot be included in any US-Soviet deal has been respected by Mr Kohl's proposed formula. The Pershing 1As would only be scrapped once the US and Soviet Union had fully implemented their treaty on the abolition of medium-range missiles.

Though the path to an INF agreement and, possibly a Reagan-Gorbachev summit, now appears to have been cleared, the issues raised by the German missile affair have not been solved by any means. Not only Bonn, but Paris and London, have been made acutely aware of the strategic gap in Europe's defences which will be left by the abolition of Pershing-launched Cruise and Ground-launched Cruise and Pershing. That feeling has been reinforced by the absence of any really significant progress in the disarmament negotiations on strategic nuclear weapons and conventional forces.

The optimistic view is that the improved atmosphere resulting from an INF agreement will facilitate progress in other areas of arms control, but that cannot be taken for granted. Long before other and even more important arms reduction issues, the Western alliance, and its European members in particular, will have to decide how it can adapt its defence strategy to the new situation. The disarmament negotiations on strategic nuclear weapons and conventional forces may cause as many problems as their controversial arrival.

## Not quite a third force

BRITAIN'S party conference season—the first since the Conservatives won their third successive victory in a general election—opens with the Social Democrats in Portsmouth this weekend. But in a sense the SDP conference has already taken place: the majority of the party membership has voted for a merger with the Liberals and it is unlikely that the decision will be reversed.

We have argued before that the ballot on the merger was premature. It came too soon after a general election in which the Alliance did not do as well as it had hoped, but polled around 23 per cent of the vote, while the Labour Party claimed just over 30 per cent—a depressing performance for the country's official opposition, supposed to have been given a new lease of life by the leadership of Mr Neil Kinnock. A pause for analysis would have been the wiser course.

Still, the ballot was held and it is increasingly futile to argue with the result. An SDP ramp may remain, and in Dr David Owen will have a telling spokesman. But the broader reality is that if there is to be a third force in British politics, it is more likely to be the new party than the Owenites. Since even the term "third force" is subject to question under the British electoral system, the room for a fourth must be strictly limited.

### Lib-Lab pact

The Liberals alone were a third force for many years, yet although they often had influence, they very rarely had power. Their successes came in by-elections and occasionally in opinion polls. The closest they came to having a say in policy-making was the offer of a coalition from Mr Edward Heath after the general election of February 1974 and the Lib-Lab pact when the Labour Government lacked an overall majority later in the decade. The formation of the Social Democratic Party and subsequently of the Alliance was meant to change all that. It should be remembered that the Alliance did not set out to be a third force or to supplant the Liberals writ large. The aim was to be the second and even-

tually the first force, just as the Labour Party eventually supplanted the Liberals in the first half of the century.

None of that has come to pass. The Conservative Party today is much more united than it was when the SDP was taken place: the majority of the party membership has voted for a merger with the Liberals and it is unlikely that the decision will be reversed. It is in itself a tribute to the SDP and the Alliance that these changes in the two big parties have occurred. Without an effective third force, there might have been an even greater polarisation between the two major parties. But that, of course, is small consolation to those who wanted something more: for example, to overthrow the Labour Party and become a radical, non-socialist opposition to the Tories.

### Little comfort

The third force is now regrouping. It will be a bit bigger than the Liberals who themselves advanced by a kind of three steps forward, two steps back movement over the years. No one should sneer at a grouping that wins 23 per cent of the vote in a general election. The trouble is, however, that what the Liberals and some of the psephologists like to call a three party system is really a two-and-a-half party system. Unless the new party can find a solid and sustainable basis of support, it is likely to play the old Liberal role of providing excitement and flopping on the night.

The electoral system could, perhaps, be changed. But that is not on the cards in the lifetime of this Parliament and there is a case for saying that the two-and-a-half party approach is thoroughly helpful in that it keeps the two big parties away from extremism. That will not be of much comfort to Lord Jenkins, Mr David Steel and their supporters, yet at least by now they should know what they are up against. As for Dr Owen, he should recognise that two-and-a-half is better than two and two bits. All big parties are by their nature coalition parties. Dr Owen is standing out for perfectionism that is unattainable.

For nearly three years Swedish Customs officers have investigated the suspected smuggling of arms and explosives. They have also shed light on the commercial links between European military explosives producers to fix prices and share orders

## 'Leave Greece to the others'

THE SWEDISH Customs investigation into smuggling by the Nobel Industries Group and its subsidiary, Bofors, which has uncovered startling evidence of far-reaching cartel activities in the European military explosives industry, began modestly enough with an inquiry from the West German Customs in October 1984.

German suspicions were aroused, when on two occasions railway wagons from Bofors, ostensibly bound for Austria, actually spent only 1-2 days parked on the Austrian side of the border near Passau. They were loaded with 80,000 kg of the explosive PETN, used in detonating and priming compositions, as a base charge in anti-aircraft shells, and mixed with TNT in mines, bombs and torpedoes.

Following the brief halt at the Austrian border, the wagons went to a small port near Hamburg and the explosives were loaded on to ships bound for Syria—an end-user country forbidden under the terms of Sweden's sweeping arms export regulations.

After two and a half years of painstaking investigations—including 29 raids on the offices of Bofors Nobelkrut, the company's explosives division, and the offices of Scandinavian Commodity, an arms dealer in southern Sweden—the customs investigators uncovered a tangled trail of suspected explosives smuggling, most often with Iran as final buyer.

The investigation culminated at the end of May with the indictment for gross smuggling of Mr Mats Lundberg, former marketing director of Nobel Krut, which includes the Nobelkrut explosives division. Also indicted was Mr Karl-Erik Schmitz, owner of Scandinavian Commodity, who has admitted being intimately involved in supplying arms and explosives to Iran.

The Bofors papers seized by Swedish Customs have disclosed much more than the suspected smuggling, however. They reveal intimate commercial links forged by the Swedish explosives producer with its ostensible competitors

in Western Europe.

Key sections of the 6,000-page investigation were passed to the Swedish competition authorities, NO (Näringsfrihetsombudsman) earlier this summer and triggered an immediate cartel probe into Bofors.

NO's initial report, contained in an internal memorandum, says that the Customs inquiry indicates that Nobelkrut, represented by its sister company Bofors, was "a member of three international explosives cartels." The cartels are described by Bofors as "clubs," says the NO memorandum.

It says "the suppliers which are members in one or more of the clubs are: Nobelkrut (Bofors), Société Nationale des Poudres et Explosifs (SNPE), a state-owned French company, Dyno Industriell, Norway, Dynamite, an Italian explosives company based in Udine, Nobel Explosives NEC, a unit of ICI, PRB, the fully owned defence subsidiary of Gechem, Bel-

The cartels are described by Bofors as clubs, says the memorandum

gium's third largest chemicals producer, and Société Suisse des Explosifs (SSE), a private Swiss company.

The NO report says the three clubs operated in propellant powders, pentyl PETN (an explosive), and nitrocellulose (civil explosives). The seized Bofors documents cover the activities of the first two explosives, but not the third, which took place in 1981-85.

According to Mr Lundberg's official testimony, parts of which are included in the NO report, the main club was the one organised by Bofors. But Bofors, working under the initials EASSP, the European Association for Study of Safety Problems in Production and Use of Propellant Powders, it is an officially registered trade association in Brussels. The NO memorandum says

Notes from a 1982 meeting of the PETN club in Geneva: Representatives of four companies are discussing prices offered in different markets. This is the type of evidence assembled by Stig Age (right), the Swedish public prosecutor responsible for the Bofors explosives smuggling case

the purpose of the associations is "the exchange of information about accidents and the discussion of safety questions concerning, for example, the transport of explosive goods."

The NO report then quotes directly from Mr Lundberg's testimony: "In addition it happens that outside the official proceedings there is a group that meets for commercial interest. Then of course it is unavoidable that we swap business chat between us."

The NO memorandum says an examination of the Bofors reports shows evidence of a series of consultations and decisions which indicate that the clubs worked like cartels. "The suppliers involved take joint decisions on price-fixing and market-sharing." The seized Bofors papers, the NO memorandum says, show members dividing up orders received by club members.

Several of the named companies declined to comment on the allegations. Mr Hans Bloemendael, chief executive of Dyno, said his company had been called to a meeting with the Norwegian competition authorities, but added: "Dyno is not a member of any pentyl (PETN) club. I am not aware that there is such a club."

A spokesman for PRB denied knowledge of a cartel agreement on fixing prices or dividing market sectors, while Mr René Fahnd, manager of SSE, said there were regular contacts between producers within organisations such as CEEFC, the Brussels-based Council of European Chemical Associations.

The companies met unofficially to discuss "certain problems," he said, and there was an exchange of technical information, but he declined to make any comment on the mention of SSE in the Stockholm statements.

ICI's chief press officer, Mr Derek Dewar, said: "We cannot comment on these documents which we have not seen. All we can do is reinforce ICI's position on such matters, which has been made clear to company employees in several occasions. Our policy is that they should not be in-

cluded in any activity of this kind." Last year ICI was one of a group of international chemicals companies that were fined a total of £35m by the European Commission for running a price-fixing cartel in polypropylene. It said then that it had issued a new code of conduct to all relevant employees in 1984, when the commission's investigations began reaffirming its requirement that its business be conducted in full compliance with all competition laws.

The NO report includes key sections of the usually handwritten meeting notes made by the Bofors executives. The first describes a meeting with Mr Guy Chevallier, of SNPE, in Paris on November 13, 1981. Guy Chevallier, who was then SNPE's director of sales and marketing, said this was just an accident. He offered to share, but I declined and said we had this in our favour and that the main thing in this case was not to get the order but that we made sure the price level was raised."

The Bofors document then makes clear how prices could be raised through using high orders to make another apparently lower offer appear attractive. "A tender inquiry for 200 tons PETN to Bulgaria, Guy could not give the price level. I said on March 19, 1982, includes details of prices offered by various of the producers in different markets. It then concludes by listing the decisions made by the club on: contracted work on hand for 1982; expected work for 1982.

2—The group will decide who will get new orders on the basis of these figures. 3—All inquiries more than 10 tons will be a subject for consultation. 4—Next meeting 25/5 (arrival 24/5) in Nice. At the Nice meeting discussions take place on dividing up

certain markets. The seized Bofors report includes: "Future: Bofors. We want East Europe, incl Yugoslavia. We will leave Greece and Portugal to the others. Bofors (Dynamite): Italy most important, wants exclusive rights there, refrains from exports totally. SNPE: France alone has had 15/200 tons exports per year and needs this in future. If he gets Argentina he is satisfied."

The Bofors report concludes: "Decisions: East Europe for Bofors. SNPE leaves Italy and Greece and leaves Camels in Portugal. Guy wants Argentina. If he gets it he can give it partly to us others. Leaves East Europe, Morocco and Algeria. Bofors gets only Scandinavia and East Europe and part of Italy. Bofors refrains from all exports."

The Swiss producer is said to be not in France, East Europe and Scandinavia, but in Peru, Greece, Portugal, Mexico and Algeria. Another report deals with a meeting in Copenhagen on October 11, 1984 at which export prices are decided for certain products within and outside Europe. The Bofors paper says: "Export prices maintained, ie SwFr 7.25, Europe, SwFr 6.85 outside Europe. Market sharing arrangements maintained without alteration."

At a meeting of the EASSP club in Oslo on October 6, 1983 decisions are taken on target prices for certain products. The Bofors paper includes the following paragraphs: "Prices: Comp B: Dyno sold 16 tons to FFV for DM 15.75 exworks. We reported 60 tons for DM 15.75 (did not mention Italy). DM 16 is kept as target price. "RDIX: Target price DM 29.

Kevin Done

Additional research by Will Dawkins in Brussels, John Wicks in Zurich, George Graham in Paris and John Wicks in Rome.

## Wellbeing in Wales

Yesterday's announcement in Cardiff of the setting up of the Institute of Welsh Affairs—a sort of gathering of the principlality's great and the good—had to be rushed forward from its original launch date next month because news of it leaked.

(The Welsh capital is getting something of a bad reputation for keeping secrets. Only a couple of weeks ago, Cardiff Bay's plans for the appointment of a chief executive got into the papers, to the chagrin of all concerned.)

Henry Kroch, one-time chairman of the successful high-tech concern AB Electronics, who heads the new organisation, denied the body would be a pressure group or a Celtic think-tank. "Think-tanks sometimes get things done and sometimes they don't," he carefully told a questioner. He also denied it was a Welsh version of England's putative National Forum. The Scottish Council (Development and Industry) was a better model.

So is it powerhouse or talking shop? "It's a gathering of

## Men and Matters

people prominent in their own fields who share a real concern for Wales and her future. Its objective is to promote the prosperity and wellbeing of Wales." Its first task will be to study how to regenerate the industrial valleys, a project the Government is not going to reinvent the wheel by repetition," he assured his listeners.

Who are the powerhouse people then? Sitting alongside Kroch on the platform were iron and steel union leader John Foley, the CBI's local man, Ian Kelsall, Idwal Symonds, chairman of HRV (Wales), Sir Donald Welsh, director of the Welsh Development Agency, and a prominent local lawyer, Keith James of Phillips and Buck.

### Odds and ends

Punters at today's horse racing and greyhound meetings will also be able to place tax-free bets on anything from whether there will be a wet day to whether the Loch Ness monster will be found, thanks to a Customs and Excise ruling. The 4 per cent tax on bets placed at racetracks was lifted in this year's Finance Act but the Excise claimed that this concession applied only to "sporting events." This week, following legal advice, it backed down and said that all on-course bets would be free of the tax.

The ruling will not bleed the Exchequer dry. Betting tax

collected at race meetings in 1985-86 amounted to £25m. Only a tiny proportion of this was related to activities other than horse or greyhound racing, say bookmakers Ladbroke and William Hill.

Tax collected through betting shops on the other hand, where bets are subject to a 5 per cent levy—although most bookmakers charge 10 per cent—came to nearly £300m.

Nevertheless, the bookmakers are herding the ruling as a victory of principle. "If it makes it easier for our punters to place bets, we welcome it," says William Hill.

Incidentally, the odds against a white Christmas are currently quoted by William Hill at 10-1.

### Timewatch

If you suffer badly from jet-lag, try ignoring the time change on your next business trip and stick doggedly to your normal hours.

This blinkered approach is recommended by Timothy Monk of the "sleep evaluation center" at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine.

Writing in the second issue of Work and Stress, a new journal published by Taylor & Francis, Monk says: "If one makes this choice, then obviously one keeps one's watch on the old time, tries to remain indoors as much as possible and sticks rigidly to the home routine."

respect to both destination and home base time zones, thus avoiding crucial decisions at times when your body thinks it should be doing something else.

"Examples of particular activities to avoid are driving in the early hours of the morning home base time (since vigilance and concentration will then be most impaired), and difficult and complex problem-solving in the mid to late evening home base time (since that represents the low ebb of short-term memory and verbal reasoning abilities)."

More prosaically, Monk reckons the jet-lag sufferer should always take two things to bed: a non-alcoholic mid-night snack and a good set of ear-plugs.

### Flight of fancy

My story about the heron and the goldfish pond prompted a reader to recall his adventures when he stood a large pond in his property with trout. All went well until a local heron discovered this new source of a good meal. Seeking a deterrent, this reader was also assured that there was nothing better than one of the plastic models of the bird being sold at the local garden centre.

He mapped out the last remaining specimen for £14.95, hurried home, placed the model ankle-deep at the edge of the pond, and turned to other tasks. A few minutes later he was summoned by his wife to observe a real heron, which had alighted beside the model and appeared to be getting very amorous. The bird took off as soon as anyone approached, but returned for further visits.

It was apparent that far from deterring others, the plastic heron was acting as a decoy much as the plastic ducks used by wildfowling to attract real ones. My reader returned his plastic heron to the garden centre, was refunded his £14.95, and is still seeking protection for his trout.

Observer

## HAMPSON INDUSTRIES PLC

Engineering and Manufacturing: Industrial Cleaning, Maintenance and Allied Services

FOURTH YEAR IN SUCCESSION OF RECORD PROFITS

Capitalisation Issue of one for five proposed.

Results to 31st March	1987	1986	
Turnover	£31.5M	£24.6M	+28%
Profit before taxation	£2.82M	£1.72M	+64%
Dividend per share	1.375p	1.132p	+21%
Earnings per share	6.01p	3.77p	+60%

Extract from the Chairman's Statement:

I think I can promise that this increased rate of dividend will be maintained on the proposed increased capital i.e. a further increase during the current year of not less than 20%.

The management figures available to me are encouraging and in the short term show that we are comfortably ahead of the equivalent figures for last year. I shall content myself by saying that the current year looks like being a good one.

John Wardle

Copies of the Annual Report and Accounts can be obtained from the Secretary.

Hampson Court, 77 Birmingham Road, West Bromwich, West Midlands B70 6PY.



## Tim Dickson looks at a Belgian institution under pressure

and international reputation would make him the ideal choice to succeed the present Governor Reese Lamy when the latter steps down.

Not the least fascinating element in the current drama is how the prbane and instinctively open, it sometimes bawdy Steve, as he likes to be known, has become a group whose name in Belgium is a byword for discretion. He has certainly performed a key role in developing La Generale's international operations, not least in the field of high technology, but until the recent crisis when his announcements have been increasingly prominent, his style has often been uncharacteristically coy.

Silly or not—and we are unlikely to know at least until an extraordinary general meeting on September 8—the recent "leak" has raised wider questions of management style. It has highlighted the predicament of a company which like many in Europe is a very big fish at home—but has been a small fish in the international market.

More statistics — a stock market capitalisation of around BFR 100bn (£1.6bn) and 1988 profits of just over BFR 5.51bn — do not adequately reflect the significance of the company's ownership or the place in the Belgian political firmament of *Société Générale de Belgique*. It is not just that the company started life as the nation's central bank 165 years ago with the King as sole shareholder, or that it remains housed in elegant classical buildings in the Royal Palace on the other side of Parliament on the *Parc de Bruxelles*. The fact is that thanks to individual shareholders' obsession with secrecy and the traditional system of bearer shares which enables them to avoid identification, *Société Générale* exercises a sort of influence through small minority stakes which would only be possible in the UK or the US if full majority control — 50 per cent of the shares — were required.

All in all Société Générale's special web of connections extends to 1,267 Belgian and overseas companies taking in everything from financial services, electronics and chemicals to diamonds, cement and non-ferrous metals.

Questions posed by the extraordinary events of the last few weeks is whether the reorganisation since 1981 of the company's giant portfolio into 10 clear sectors, its 100 subsidiaries and its services like financial services and telecommunications, and its avowed international orientation is proceeding quickly enough or is indeed moving in the right direction.

The possibility that somebody else might want to take over the task, or at least have a major say in the company's management, was first raised in mid-June when Denis Vandenberghe one of Brussels' tiniest and least known stockbroking firms, began to acquire

half of a still unknown client (or clients). Rumour mongers have since had a field day with **Hanson Trust**, Sir James Goldsmith, Carlo De Benedetti, and Nomura Securities of Japan among the more and less credible names which have been tossed about.

Such speculation has not been widely appreciated inside Societe Generale's imposing headquarters, especially since the company remains ignorant of the buyers and its intentions. And under Japanese law with force him to reveal his identity or the size of his stake. Nor have the directors taken kindly to suggestions that recent offers by the Japanese Sumitomo Corporation and Compagnie Generale d'Electricite (CGE), with a view to both taking stakes in the company, plus the proposal at the forthcoming meeting to increase the authorised capital by 60 per cent without offering existing shareholders preferential rights.

defensive manoeuvres, designed to deter an unwelcome suitor. "That is a quite common concept with the objectives which we set for ourselves well before these Stories came out," explained Davignon in a recent interview. He pointed out that the "people at the companies were companies with whom collaboration agreements already exist—Société Générale itself has a stake of around 2.5 per cent in CGE and French banks own shares in the other companies, notably through the telecommunications group Alcatel—and that the stakes envisaged would be relatively modest.

Davignon added: "The discussion is in line with our declared policy of seeking stable long-term international shareholders in the same way that we are seeking to diversify our business activities internationally. It is the notion of a network of people who do things you can say and I don't think you can say that we have

Most observers in Brussels accept that while Davignon may have arrived five years later than would have been ideal, the best hope for the company's future lies in the combination of his aristocratic background and his essential qualification for dealing with the Belgian and French families which control the business) and his proven international contacts (evident, for example, in the Sumitomo deal). The current problems, however, are not just confined to the potentially distracting and time-consuming litigation. It remains whether he can ultimately sort out the difficulties at companies like ACEC and the once-thriving Belgian arms manufacturer Fabrique Nationale — and by so doing help to stabilize the country's more exciting and profitable directions.

Although the guessing game continues, the previously hectic trading in Societe Generale's shares has died down and there is a widespread feeling that the main excitement may now be coming as a break-

might be for a foreign predator, the chances of breaking through the deep-rooted Belgian bonds which link the various parts of the Societe Generale empire would in practice be limited. "Belgium is a small country where constraints and management cannot be as flexible as in the U.S. I accept that the European rhythm is not the U.S. rhythm, but it may be that that is beyond what is reasonable," observes Davignon, indicating clearly that a bid for Societe Generale would fall into this category.

Davignon firmly denies that the recent buying was inspired in any way by the company itself, but there is a mounting suspicion that the community that friends of the group may have started on operation to support the share price, which subsequently got out of control. Alternatively, Japanese or American investors could have been jumping in to take advantage of the placing of shares in the Tokyo market, an event which is expected to widen interest in the group.

Notwithstanding next month's meeting — at which a raider might be expected to declare his hand — the answer may well be that the market after the silver season has passed

# Collectors cornered

THESE is a captivating painting in the National Gallery of Scotland called Distraining for the Rent (right), by the early 19th-century artist Sir David Wilkie. It shows a bailiff and his two assistants, effecting the seizure of a tenant who has defaulted on his rent. The tenant and his numerous family are in despair, but the bailiff is sternly unyielding.

If he were alive today Wilkie would probably have been signed up to provide lurid images for the Scottish local authorities in their campaign against the community charge. The government's new flat-rate charge on residents replaced the rates levied in Scotland in 1989, having been approved by Parliament just before the June general election.

But, as Mr Charles Grey, the Labour leader of Strathclyde Region in Scotland (the biggies) local authority, says, "We are fighting a desperate rearguard action in the hope that the government will finally see sense." For the past year members of the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (Labour-dominated body, have

refused to have any discussions with the Scottish Office on how the poll tax—the only name for the community charge which Mr Grey will tolerate—will be implemented.

In Glasgow's Illiantine City Council, William English, the director of financial services for the district council, gloomily contemplates the impending destruction of his neat system for collecting rates. In Scotland (unlike England) the upper tier authorities—the regional councils—are responsible for collecting rates. Strathclyde issues individual rate demands to Glasgow's owner-occupiers, and sends one single rate demand to the district council to cover the city's 165,000 council tenants—who represent no less than two-thirds of all households in the city. The district council, which collects rates from owner-occupiers in a single payment, transfers the rates to the regional council.

All that will end when the community charge comes in. First, Strathclyde regional council will have to compile and keep up to date a computerised list of everybody with an address throughout the area, with a population of 2.2m. A grass

register will be put together by using the existing election roll and the electoral register.

Then it will issue enquiry forms to households by post and send out canvassers to make door-to-door visits. It will be a much more detailed operation than the relatively haphazard process of compiling the electoral roll. The community charge registration officer will be able to cross-check with other official records—but not social workers' reports or council records.

Some Labour politicians believe people will deliberately keep their names off the electoral roll—and thus give up their right to vote—to escape the community charge. But the council says this could be pointless as the electoral roll will be only one of several sources.


Maintaining the register, says Mr English, "is all right where people don't move much. But in areas where the electoral roll is only 85 per cent correct, it is when it is published, and on top of that about 25 per cent of the population of Glasgow moves once a year.

The problems for Mr English's scheme will begin when the charge has to be collected

from the tenants—the regional council will deal with the owner occupiers. A completely separate system from the rent collection operation will be required since more than half the poll tax payers are different people from the tenants. “We have some tenants under 18, who pay rent but will not be eligible for the community charge,” he explains, while those will be the tenants who are aged over 18 who live with them who will be expected to pay the poll tax.

“At the moment a lot of tenants pay us some money when they are flush. We divide that up between rent and rates. But we will have to collect the poll tax. How would we decide if the money’s for the tenant’s poll tax, or his wife’s poll tax, or his 18-year-old son?”

Many of the sums to be collected will be very small. Glasgow’s council tenants are poor: 75 per cent of them obtain a housing allowance, and the rents and rates, and half pay no rent or rates at all. The law requires that even the poorest pay 20 per cent of the community charge projected at £294 a year, which is a little less than a little over £1 a week.



**Taxpayer.**

The tenant would hope to recover this from social security, though the mechanism for this has still to be worked out. Glasgow district expects that only 80 per cent of the community charge can be collected in the city. That assumption is untested, and the Government, as well as some Scottish local government officials, consider it far too pessimistic. Mr English believes that if there is widespread non-payment there will be a backlash from "the unlucky upright citizen who pays and then finds the community charge going up

lament: Glasgow thinks 20 per cent because of the people who don't.

Mr Pat Lally, the Labour leader of the council, says: "Tax avoidance is socially acceptable but I don't think avoiding the poll tax will be because its consequences will directly affect others in the same place." That, he says, could mean that canvassing turned into snooping and councils might be pressed to offer bounties to people who report poll tax evaders. "It's the social antagonisms between the payers and the non-payers that I'm afraid of," he says.

Scottish Office ministers are

cent of the poll tax will go to increasingly irritated at this stream of negative comments from local authorities, since they believe they won the argument when the community charge was passed by parliament. The Government has never denied that the community charge will be more complicated and expensive to operate than the "discredited" domestic rating system.

Its own figures suggest that collecting the community charge in Scotland will cost about double that of levying rates — an additional £17m to £22m on top of the present £30m.

collected.

Strathclyde, which covers almost half the population of Scotland, has estimated that it will need 270 extra staff to operate the system plus almost 100 canvassers. It puts the capital cost of setting up the system at £5m, and annual running costs at £86m.

Yesterday the Scottish Office issued a Commencement Order under which councils must start preparing to implement the community charge from September 14. The local authorities have indicated that they do not intend to break the law by doing nothing.

From the *Chairman*,  
*Society of Business Economists*

Sir, — Professor Simpson's article (August 20) on a mission for economists came to me as the most logical conclusions, but I am not much less convinced about the profession. It is misleading to say that it is "composed largely of academics and civil servants enjoying life-long salaries" (with a few exceptions) and that it is "a vast waste of money" (with over 600 members). We have a clear mission to analyse, forecast and advise wherever the economy and our employing organisations intersect.

Prof Simpson is, of course, correct when he refers to the importance of understanding human behaviour which distinguishes the study of economics from the natural sciences. While individual behaviour in the economic context is sufficiently similar to enable many useful forecasts to be made, the earnings of the average element means that such forecasts always contain an element of uncertainty. Good professional practice by business economists is to predict a range of possible outcomes, with limits and probabilities, not single points, and to describe the impact of sensitivity and risk analysis on the forecasts.

The Treasury's economists' economic forecasts are sharply criticised by the Professor, now publish the range of error in their past forecasts.

Nevertheless, something has gone wrong in the world of economics for articles like Professor Simpson's to be written and published in the serious Press. I believe that the reasons for these mistakes made on both the supply and demand sides of the market for economists' services.

When this society was founded in 1958 only one year's detailed national accounts for the UK had been published, while a computer was still a scientific device full of hot valves and complex electronic circuitry the size of a house. Complex econometric modelling was impossible, data were scanty, with a wealth of data and easy access to cheap and powerful computers, it is relatively easy. As a new, "high technology" activity it has attracted many talented people, not all of whom have the solid training in economics. The study of human behaviour. (Regrettably it now appears quite common for schools to encourage good pupils in the natural sciences, especially mathematics and physics, to think of taking up economics as a last resort, a last line, instead of pointing out its close relationship to behavioural subjects like history).

It is my view that too much emphasis has thus been placed on econometric modelling. Since modelling is based on past data, it is not worked well when fundamental changes occur in the economy but the latter, as has been the case after successive

the first oil crisis in 1973. The constants in the modellers' equations have proved as variable as the variables!

On the demand side there has been substantial funding, both public and private for that part of economics which appeared to use the latest technology and was thus thought to offer more accuracy and certainty. Competition for funds by forecasting institutions and for recognition by analysts in the securities markets has aggravated this situation. Media interest has been greater than different forecasts can be quoted to make a story and league tables published. The detailed qualifications and explanations in the texts supporting the forecasts are largely ignored.

I would certainly agree with Professor Simpson's call for the centrality of human behaviour in economics to be emphasised in the world at large, as it always has been in the more private world of the business economist. Since you, Sir, have now started the process by publishing the Professor's article I always expect you to continue to restore the balance by giving more weight to economic analysis and less to the simplification of the results of econometric modelling?

David Kingston.

11 Bay Tree Walk,  
Watford, Herts.

## Achievements in Manchester

From Mr R. R. Turner

Sir,—Mr A. Lucking (August 25) suggests a third runway at Heathrow as the solution to the problem of congested problems of the south-east. He also quotes a report by the air traffic flows in the regions are too small to support direct services.

Why then is Manchester Europe's fastest-growing airport at the present time, currently breaking all records and introducing new services to all points around the globe, despite restrictions imposed by Government which, if lifted, would see greater passenger growth?

In the past two years, new direct scheduled services have opened up from Manchester to the Middle East, Chicago, Israel, Singapore and Moscow, as well as numerous new destinations around Western Europe.

Your correspondent also suggests that the Government's flights from Manchester to Australia through Heathrow because of lack of support. If

from two to three per week? But why does it bother me? Why should I be bothered by trying to Manchester at all? I would suggest for the same reason it continues its journey from London to Melbourne on an airbus down under.

Give Manchester its just rewards for its record-breaking achievements, and if we are ever to see an end to the north/south divide, we must be concerned to move their blinkers and recognise the fact that not everyone wants to get caught up in London's air traffic bottle-neck, as long as they don't have to.

R. S. Turner.  
81, Darlington Rd, Hartburn,  
Stockton on Tees, Cleveland.

**NZ butter in  
Britain**

From Mr I. Robinson

Sir—Mr Anthony Rosen urges us (August 25) to "inject" a "non-emotional financial sense" into the debate about New Zealand butter "and to consider the consequences with this fiasco to save (taxpayers') money." If the saving of taxpayers' money is to be the decisive factor should not we bear in mind that, if a free market operated, no taxpayers' money would be spent at all? In those circumstances, it is conceivable that New Zealand butter could compete successfully with other butter. Imports of New Zealand butter into this country are a casualty of subsidy, not, except in the most marginal and remote cases, a benefit to the taxpayer. But if butter is to be subsidised, as Mr Rosen seems to assume, and if we therefore remove the argument back into the area of a free market, it is possible to believe that the farmers of New Zealand are more deserving of subsidy than those beneficiaries of our new corn and wheat subsidies in France, Germany and Ireland.

Ian Robinson.  
Brynhill Press,  
Cross Hill Cottage,  
Gringly-on-the-Hill,  
Doncaster, Yorks.

**A strategy for  
electricity**

From Mr S. Steward

Sir—I am afraid that a protracted engagement as the subject has played my comment on the letters (August 12) on electricity.

The article which John Lyons quotes was written in 1984 to

a mandate to privatise and it is now important to ensure that competition is introduced. John Gammie, a single generating unit whereas I prefer two or more to create competition but the key to the situation is ownership and control of the grid. While the prospect of competition is to be effective, it must be separated from generation.

If there is one thing worse than a public monopoly is a private monopoly.

Stanley Steward,  
41 Fawcetts,  
Roehampton Lane, SW15

## Tighter gun controls

*From the Secretary, National Small-Bore Rifle Association*

Sir,—From your editorial (August 26) I deduce that I am a representative of a legitimate shooting interest and may be regarded as being politically, as well as of the gun lobby.

But it would add credibility to your editorial comment if your remarks were based on reality. In reality, there is a legitimate interest in the use of small-bore rifles in sporting events such as target-shooting. Why do you qualify the use of pistols "with the word 'recreation'"?

Do you think that the members of this association proudly display their weapons in the home and from that statement draw an unwarranted conclusion?

Do you know that about a quarter of the clubs affiliated to this association do not possess a permit, let alone a gun or strongroom? Do you know that up to another half of the clubs have clubhouses in remote sites which no reasonable level of precaution could make secure for the storage of firearms and ammunition?

Do you know that it is already standard practice for police firearms officials to check with club secretaries on the length and nature of membership of an applicant for a firearms certificate?

Do you know some of the facts that we shall seek to present to the Home Secretary before any decision is reached to introduce tighter gun controls to the detriment of the responsible, shooting fraternity which represents the nation's horror at the tragedy of Hungerford?

D. King,  
Lord Roberts House,  
Bisley Camp, Brookwood,  
Woking, Surrey.

NYK's Fine-Tuned Cooling System brings the delicacy of Camembert and Brie to Japan at half the shipping cost of air freight. So naturally many more people will be buying fine French cheeses and French farmers will be smiling much more. Delicate cheeses, cherries, melons, strawberries, scallops are all perfect candidates for NYK's new Fine-Tuned Cooling System (Hyo-on). Inside these special containers, circulating air stays within 0.5°C of any level between -29.9° and 25° that you select. Humidity is also rigidly controlled. The taste — equal to that of air-blown produce — is the proof! Fine-Tuned Cooling Systems are only one of countless advanced NYK services that assure tangible client benefits. Whatever the cargo, whatever the problem, NYK has better answers for integral logistics services.

**controls**

*From the Secretary, National Small-Bore Rifle Association*

Sir,—From your editorial (August 26) I deduce that I am a representative of a legitimate shooting interest and may be regarded, euphemistically, as part of the gun lobby.

But it would add credibility to your contention that your remarks were based on reality and reason. If there is a legitimate interest in the use of small-bore rifles in sporting events such as target-shooting, would you qualify the use of pistols with the word "perhaps"? What evidence do you have that the members of this association proudly display their weapons in the home and from that statement draw an unwarranted conclusion?

Do you know that about a quarter of the clubs affiliated to this association do not possess a clubhouse, let alone a club strongroom? Do you know that up to another half of the clubs have clubhouses in remote sites which no reasonable level of security could be secured for the storage of firearms and ammunition? Do you know that it is already standard practice for police firearm officials to check with club secretaries on the length and nature of membership of an applicant for a firearms certificate?

These, Sir, are some of the facts that we shall seek to present to the Home Secretary before any decision is reached to introduce tighter gun controls to the detriment of the responsible, law-abiding fraternity of sportsmen, of which I share the nation's horror at the tragedy of Hungerford.

D. King.  
Lord Roberts House,  
Bisley Camp, Brookwood,  
Woking, Surrey.

**Britain**

**From Mr I. Robinson**

Sir,—Mr. Anthony Rosen urges us (August 25) to "inject" non-emotional financial sense" into the debate about New Zealand butter "and allow everyone concerned with this fiasco to save (taxpayers') money." If the saving of taxpayers' money is to be the decisive factor, the debate we bear in mind that, if a free market operated, no taxpayers' money would be spent at all? In those circumstances, it is conceivable that New Zealand butter could compete successfully with other butter. Imports of New Zealand butter into this country are a casualty of subsidy, not, except in the most marginal and accidental way, a beneficiary. But if butter is to be subsidised, as Mr Rosen seems to assume, and if we therefore remove the argument back into an area where emotional content must be allowed, it is possible to believe that the farmers of New Zealand are more deserving of subsidy than those beneficiaries of our new corn laws, the farmers of France, Germany and Ireland.

**Ian Robinson.**

*Former Mill Press.*

**Cross Hill Cottage,**  
**Cringley-on-the-Hill,**  
**Doncaster, Yorks.**

**A strategy for electricity**

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Why then is Manchester Europe's fastest-growing airport at the present time, currently breaking all records and introducing new services to all points around the globe, despite restrictions imposed by Government which, if lifted, would see greater passenger service?

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*Lord Roberts House,  
Bisley Camp, Brookwood,  
Woking, Surrey.*

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# FINANCIAL TIMES

Friday August 28 1987

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## Stewart Fleming in Wyoming reports on the future of US financial services industry Commerce not made welcome at the bank

WHEN Mr Paul Volcker stepped down as chairman of the Federal Reserve Board earlier this month he retired with a victory which he may come to value as much as any he won in his years of public service.

In the banking reform bill, which President Ronald Reagan reluctantly signed at the beginning of the month, was a provision Mr Volcker fought for and which could have a major influence in shaping the future of the American financial services industry along lines he favours.

The law imposes a total ban on so-called "non-bank banks" - unregulated bank-like companies. In doing so, Federal Reserve officials say it places a barrier between the merger of banking and commerce, a trend which has been accelerating in recent years as firms outside the banking business have moved into it by exploiting legal loopholes.

But by banning "non-bank banks" and imposing a moratorium until March next year on moves by bank regulators to sidestep Congress and implement the sort of restructuring of the US financial system which is taking place in London, Tokyo and in Canada, Congress has also heeded once again at addressing the complex issue of how to reform an American financial system which all agree badly needs to be remodelled.

Mr Volcker, who also argued in favour of major reform of the US financial system, nevertheless fought tenaciously against the trend towards increasing ownership of non-bank bank-like companies by commercial entities such as retailer Sears and Roebuck.

Opposed to him were ardent deregulators in the Reagan Administration and companies such as Citicorp, the New York bank, which believed that bank profitability could be enhanced, the economy strengthened and consumer welfare improved by removing restraints on the freedom of banks to diversify into non-financial businesses or commercial enterprises.

Along with Mr Alan Greenspan, the new Fed chairman, they believe that provided a suitable regulatory "firewall" can be constructed to protect the bank and its depositors from being exploited, there is no reason to prevent any sort of business from owning a bank.

Mr Volcker, however, has argued that banks, because of the key role they play in the economy and because of their responsibility to the public, must be carefully regulated.

Critics of radical deregulation are deeply sceptical, moreover, of the claim that suitable regulations can be drawn up to insulate a bank which is part of a larger group, for example, either being exploited by commercial owners or from a damaging erosion of confidence.

But judging from the recent vote on Capitol Hill and the latest group pressures it reflects as well as from the thrust of debate among banking experts who attended a conference on restructuring the financial sector organised this month by the Kansas City Federal Reserve Bank, this is unlikely.

Moreover, if it were to happen the evidence suggests it would only be in the context of such a strict regulatory regime and a reform of the deposit insurance laws which would make it much less attractive for commercial and financial firms to merge.

At the conference held in Wyoming last week it was striking that even staunch deregulators such as Mr William Seidman, the chairman of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, and a Citicorp representative, Mr Thomas Huetts, while proposing reforms which would allow commercial and banking firms to belong to the same company, also accepted the need for stricter regulation as part of such a system.

Indeed, Mr Gerald Corrigan, the president of the New York Federal Reserve Bank and a man who believes that banking and commerce should be kept apart, maintained that constructing an effective regulatory "firewall" to protect a bank and its depositors would require such regulatory overhaul that it would make owning a bank by a commercial concern an unattractive proposition.

Even Mr Seidman conceded that his own proposal, which would allow commercial banks unrestricted entry into the investment banking business of securities underwriting, should only be implemented slowly.

The statement on Capitol Hill among the interest groups involved in the financial sector suggests, in the judgment of experts such as Mr Carter Gougeon, a Washington banking consultant, that Mr Seidman will not be able to put together a coalition of political support strong enough to force through a radical reform of the US financial system.

The Congressional banking committees, moreover, are under the control of Democrats who are sceptical about the creation of large and powerful financial conglomerates, while the influence of the free market ideologies of the Reagan Administration is rapidly waning.

The likelihood is, therefore, that rather than sweeping reforms of the financial sector the US over the next few years will see a continuation of the incremental change - "muddling through" Mr Gougeon called it - which has taken place in recent years.

In the judgment of Mr Robert Litan, a Brookings Institution expert this could well mean that the impetus for change will come from the States, not the Federal Government, as has been the case in recent years when the States have taken the lead in breaking down barriers to nationwide branch banking.

Arguably "muddling through" might be the best option, certainly a better one than sweeping radical reform in an economy whose currency is vulnerable internationally, whose financial sector is overburdened with bad and poor quality debt and whose financial regulatory system is (like bank regulators worldwide) failing to keep abreast of the rapid globalisation and innovation in world financial markets.

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It is hard to disagree with Mr Corrigan, who argues that today the risks associated with radical reform are too high. The US financial system do not appear to be worth the uncertain rewards. To those who maintain that today American financial firms are falling behind rivals in countries such as Japan, the response should be that, if true, that is in larger part the price of macro-economic policy mismanagement, and that, as a result, financial restructuring may be worse than the disease.



Alan Greenspan (left) and his predecessor Paul Volcker

should the commercial owner run into financial difficulties. The vote in Congress to ban "non-bank banks" is not seen, however, as a vote which reflects the strength of feeling on Capitol Hill on the issue of principle, the mixing of commercial and banking business. Rather, it is seen to reflect the strength of the most powerful competing interest groups in the financial services industry, the big and small banks, the securities firms, the insurance brokers and real estate agents, each of which is blocking the other from shaping the restructuring of the financial sector in a way which is most to its advantage.

When Congress revisits the issue of passing laws to restructure the financial sector, it could be in a matter of months but is more likely to be several years down the road, it is still possible that it will decide that a larger group, for example, either being exploited by commercial owners or from a damaging erosion of confidence.

But judging from the recent vote on Capitol Hill and the latest group pressures it reflects as well as from the thrust of debate among banking experts who attended a conference on restructuring the financial sector organised this month by the Kansas City Federal Reserve Bank, this is unlikely.

Moreover, if it were to happen the evidence suggests it would only be in the context of such a strict regulatory regime and a reform of the deposit insurance laws which would make it much less attractive for commercial and financial firms to merge.

At the conference held in Wyoming last week it was striking that even staunch deregulators such as Mr William Seidman, the chairman of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, and a Citicorp representative, Mr Thomas Huetts, while proposing reforms which would allow commercial and banking firms to belong to the same company, also accepted the need for stricter regulation as part of such a system.

Indeed, Mr Gerald Corrigan, the president of the New York Federal Reserve Bank and a man who believes that banking and commerce should be kept apart, maintained that constructing an effective regulatory "firewall" to protect a bank and its depositors would require such regulatory overhaul that it would make owning a bank by a commercial concern an unattractive proposition.

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## THE LEX COLUMN

## Looking for an encore

The memories of the Wapping dispute may be fading, but the financial implications of Mr Rupert Murdoch's dramatic victory over the Fleet Street print unions continue to underpin the growth of his worldwide media empire.

The UK and Australian ends of the group follow different accounting conventions and the best guide to underlying performance is contained in the parent News Corporation figures which show that a near doubling in the UK contribution accounted for over half of the 59 per cent rise in pre-interest profits to A\$547m.

A substantial reduction in UK production costs was the primary reason for the impressive UK performance helped by increased circulation and advertising revenues for most of the UK nationals. The current year will be far less dramatic since the UK operations will have to shoulder heavy losses from the recent acquisition of Today and the impact of Wapping has already flowed through to the bottom line.

Over the last couple of years News Corporation has lifted its net profits before extraordinary items from A\$56.1m to A\$368m and this has been matched by a share performance which has more than rewarded Mr Murdoch's adventurous backers.

The key question now is whether Mr Murdoch can conjure up another quantum leap in the profits of a group which is capitalised at £3bn in the world's stock markets. The acquisition of the South China Morning Post and the Herald & Weekly Times will help, but the most obvious area for growth is the US where the group is working hard to make a success of its expensive bid to create a fourth TV network. The jury is still out regarding the wisdom of this ambitious move and a worldwide interest charge of A\$300.5m underlines the continuing financial pressures the group is facing.

Marley  
A year ago Marley had to report an extra million figures at the halfway stage in a desperate effort to convince the sceptics that the newly installed management team was beginning to sort out the group's problems. This time round there was no need for such machinations. Marley's dramatic recovery over the last 18 months has been fully recognised by the City for

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At first sight, Mountleigh's agreed bid for the Pension Fund Property Unit Trust (PFFUT) is a neat coup for Mr Tony Clegg and a corresponding blow to the image of Trafalgar House. But although Mr Clegg may have supplanted Sir Nigel Brookes as property's man of the moment, the two cases are not identical.

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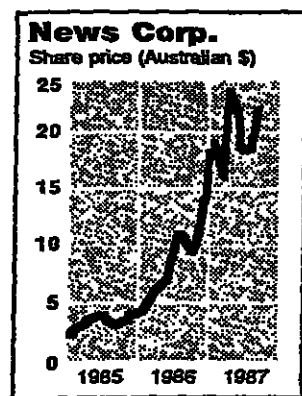
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some months now, and a more than 24 times rise in first half pre-tax profits to £25.1m barely caused a blip in the share price.

Marley's balance sheet is in a much better shape and although the group's financial transformation has involved the forced shedding of one of the "crown jewels" - the Payless chain - the three new acquisitions have more than offset the loss, contributing £14m to the pre-interest level in the latest period.

Marley's rejuvenation has been helped by buoyant trading conditions in its major markets, but the group has been reducing its dependence on the new housing market and putting more emphasis on the less cyclical refurbishment market. As a result, its recovery looks to be fairly safe in the face even of a major recession. The 18 per cent rise in the interim dividend, certainly, is witness to a new note of confidence.

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## Italy acts to curb consumer demand

By John Wyles in Rome

ITALY'S new Christian Democrat-led government yesterday pushed up domestic interest rates and unveiled an emergency tax package designed to cut consumer demand and put an end to speculation on a devaluation of the lira.

The measures appeared designed as much for political as economic impact after five months of political crisis and elections during which the country seemed to be drifting towards hyperinflation and a balance of payments difficulties.

The tax package is designed to raise L3,400bn (£2.6bn) in new revenues by Mr Giuliano Amato, who became Italy's first Socialist Treasury Minister a month ago, said this was not the main purpose.

Domestic demand was "overheated" in relation to output growth, said Mr Amato, and with the import bill rising, the markets needed reassuring in the face of recurrent talk of devaluation.

In a subsequent statement announcing an increase in the Bank of Italy's discount rate from 11.5 per cent to 12 per cent, the Treasury said the move underlined its commitment to a stable lira. It also suggested that package did away with the need for sterner monetary measures.

With the exception of a 1.60 increase in the price of a litre of petrol from L1,250 to L1,350, the Government has not imposed any new permanent taxes. The package's main impact on consumer demand - currently growing at an annual rate of 5 per cent - should come from a 4 per cent percentage point rise in VAT rates on cars, hi-fi, video and photographic equipment, and household furniture and electrical goods. However, the high rates will only apply until the end of December.

What makes Hilton International such an attractive proposition to so many rival operators is that it offers a rare chance to capture so many prime sites in major capitals of the world.

"Hilton established itself in the international marketplace many years ago and not surprisingly was able to get some of the best sites available," points out Mr Terry Barlow, regional vice-president in charge of operations for Marriott in the UK and Europe.

Hilton International has two other key attractions for would-be buyers. "It has a very good global spread of hotels in many of the world's key markets," he adds.

Marriott is one of a number of hotel chains which are believed to be closely watching developments at Hilton International, although it refuses to be drawn on whether a bid will materialise.

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## David Churchill assesses suitors for Hilton hotels

## Key to unlock the world

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# SECTION II - COMPANIES AND MARKETS

## FINANCIAL TIMES

Friday August 28 1987

**WOLSELEY**  
 FIRM  
 FORCEFUL  
 FAR SIGHTED

NEW YORK FIRM MOVES TO DEFEND WELL-MANAGED COMPANIES UNDER ATTACK

### US Lazard launches white knight fund

By ANATOLE KALETSKY IN NEW YORK

A \$300 million "white knight fund" for the defence of well-managed companies that are threatened by hostile takeover bids, is to be launched by Lazard Freres, the private New York investment banking firm.

Lazard, which has been one of the most active and profitable participants in the current merger boom on Wall Street despite its practice of never backing corporate raiders, has already raised more than \$1bn from institutional investors since May when it began marketing the idea of a takeover defence fund.

The fund, to be called Crossroads Partners, is likely to be formally launched within the next few

months. It would invest in "established companies with a significant gap between stock prices and inherent values," according to a partner at Lazard.

However, unlike conventional investment institutions, Crossroads Partners would buy large strategic stakes of 10 to 30 per cent in such aged buyout and arbitrage funds that have proliferated on Wall Street, Lazard would always back established managements in their restructuring efforts against outside raiders.

The hope is to provide companies with a "source of capital that can be

counted on" in the event of threatened takeovers, the Lazard partner said. Over the three to five-year period which would be the new fund's normal time horizon, Lazard believes that such a policy could prove extremely profitable at present for a number of reasons:

- Sophisticated managers of large corporations are now aware of the vulnerability of their companies to takeovers and the need to maximise their companies' values to shareholders. Lazard would hope to invest in such companies before any takeover threat was manifested and thus benefit fully from their restructuring.

● Companies "lose some of their value by being forced to restructure under pressure" and thus backing established managements can frequently be more profitable than taking companies over.

● So much money has recently gone into various arbitrage and leveraged buyout funds that the return on such investment is bound to suffer. By contrast few investors have made a deliberate practice of backing threatened companies. Those that have, including Mr Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway and General Cinema of Boston, have frequently found this to be a profitable venture.

### Dutch insurers fall in first half

By Laura Raun in Amsterdam

AEGON and AMEV, the Netherlands' second and third largest insurance companies, yesterday reported lower first-half earnings due to the strong guildler and revised downward their forecasts for the whole year.

The two companies' results rounded off the first-half reports from the leading Dutch insurers. Earlier this week, Nationale-Nederlanden, the largest, reported a 6 per cent profits rise despite the currency factor, with investments and financing activities helping.

All the top Dutch insurers have large operations abroad and are sensitive to foreign exchange fluctuations.

Aegon's net income slipped 2 per cent to F1 163m (\$79.5m) from F1 166m and for all of 1987 the company now expects profits to be roughly in line with the F1 327m of last year instead of slightly higher.

Profits from life insurance climbed 13 per cent, boosted by business in the Netherlands, while those from accident and health lines plunged 78 per cent. General insurance, notably motor insurance, saw its losses widen to F1 34m. Revenues jumped 16 per cent to F1 4.5bn from F1 4.16bn.

Amey's earnings slid 16 per cent to F1 121.5m from F1 144.3m on currency factors and, more especially, investment losses. As a result, Amey said it now expected profits to decline slightly for the whole year from the F1 322.5m of 1986.

The fixed-investment losses occurred mostly in the US and caused operating profits in life insurance to fall although business elsewhere was healthy. Operating profits in life insurance plunged 20 per cent to F1 99m

Kevin Done reports on the latest twist to a Scandinavian saga

### TRI withdraws Fermenta bid

TRANS-RESOURCES (TRI), the privately-owned US holding company, has abandoned its planned SKr1.38bn (\$216m) bid to take over Fermenta, the embattled Swedish antibiotics and chemicals group throwing the future of the heavily loss-making concern into renewed uncertainty.

In a statement issued jointly with Industrivärden, the Swedish investment company and main Fermenta shareholder, Trans-Resources said that it was unable to proceed with its proposed offer "because of the unwillingness of certain of Fermenta's Swedish banks to consent to TRI's proposed method of repaying bank loans of Fermenta."

The main opponents of the deal are believed to be PKbanken and Svenska Handelsbanken. Göteborg, Fermenta's main bank creditor, was ready to accept the TRI proposals.

TRI announced in early July that it had reached an agreement in principle with Industrivärden to acquire the investment company's 40 per cent voting stake in Fermenta, and that it planned to make a tender offer for the remaining Fer-

menta shares by the end of September. Mr Kjell Brändström, Industrivärden chief executive, said that TRI's proposal was "reasonable" but that it had not been unanimously accepted by the Swedish banks.

European banks led by the four Swedish banks Göteborg, PKbanken, Svenska Handelsbanken and Nordbanken, are currently owed around SKr1.7bn by Fermenta.

Göteborg is understood to have an exposure of around SKr500m, followed by PKbanken with around SKr350m, and Handelsbanken and Nordbanken each with around SKr175m.

Mr Brändström said that under the terms of the TRI proposal at least SKr500m of the SKr1.7bn bank debt would have been paid off within 18 months. TRI had obtained financial commitments from "highly responsible American institutions," he said.

Preliminary talks took place late yesterday between Mr Arie Genger, TRI chief executive, and Mr Bertil Holmberg, Fermenta chief executive on the possible disposal of

some individual assets to the US group. Mr Genger said that Fermenta was exploring "alternative transactions which would benefit Fermenta shareholders."

The banks were given a right of veto on any change of the main shareholder, when they helped rescue the group from the brink of financial collapse earlier this year. Handelsbanken's rejection was a surprise move, as it is closely associated with Industrivärden. Fermenta's main shareholder with a 40 per cent voting stake which has been anxious to sell its holding at the earliest opportunity.

The opposition from PKbanken and Handelsbanken suggests that some of the Swedish banks have had strong reservations about the suitability of TRI, a rather unknown quantity in Sweden, as a future owner of Fermenta.

In a separate development Mr Ulf Lignell, Göteborg deputy managing director, said that the bank intended to open bankruptcy proceedings before the end of next week against Mr Refaat El-Sayed, the discredited former Fermenta majority shareholder and chief executive on the possible disposal of

### Agreement by Lornex ends mine battle

By David Owen in Toronto

A CORPORATE battle that has raged for nearly two years over a huge British Columbia copper deposit ended with Lornex Mining, 60 per cent held by RIZ-controlled Rio Algom, agreeing to take over a copper mine and mill in Highland Valley owned by Teck Corporation of Vancouver.

The deal will cost Lornex C\$147m (US\$121m) and give Teck and two foreign partners a 5 per cent stake in Highland Valley Copper, a company formed to exploit the deposit.

The dispute began in early 1986 when Lornex cut a deal with Cominco, then a Canadian Pacific subsidiary, jointly to operate their copper facilities in the region, hence combining Cominco's comparatively rich mine with Lornex's better mill.

According to Teck chief executive, Mr Norman Keewil, this contravened an agreement between Teck and Lornex that neither would strike a deal with Cominco without the other.

### Cannon Group sinks deeper into loss

BY OUR NEW YORK STAFF

CANNON GROUP, the troubled international film production and distribution company controlled by Mr Menahem Golan and Mr Yoram Globus, sank deeper into losses in its second fiscal quarter, raising the possibility of a potentially costly forced restructuring within the next few months.

Cannon, which has not yet resolved a long-running investigation into its accounting practices by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), lost \$12m after tax in the three months ended July 4 after a loss of \$10m in the previous quarter.

Comparisons with the previous year's results were not available because of the continuing SEC investigation and "constraints of time, cost and the availability of accounting records," Cannon did explain, however, that its losses reflected weak theatrical performance of its recent film releases.

The losses also reflect a big reduction in film distribution revenues as Cannon has been forced to sell the rights to many of its films

The last two quarters' losses have reduced the company's net worth to \$31m and left it exposed to potentially disastrous financial penalties which could result from loan covenants requiring Cannon not to allow its equity to fall below \$37.5m for two quarters running.

Cannon stated that it is "actively addressing this situation" in order to ensure an equity position of more than \$37.5m by its next quarter day of October 3. As an "immediate short-term solution," Cannon has agreed to sell \$11.8m worth of stock to a Luxembourg company, Inter-corporation, which is controlled by Messrs Golan and Globus, along with Interpart, another Luxembourg-based company.

If the stock purchase had been completed by the second quarter, Cannon said that its net worth would have been \$42.6m. This suggests that the company will have to cut its losses in the current quarter by more than half, to less than \$5m, if it is to maintain its equity above \$37.5m and keep within its loan covenants.

### Group turnover at KHD slips to DM2.1bn

By Haig Simonian in Frankfurt

GROUP TURNOVER at Kföckner-Humboldt-Deutz (KHD), the West German engineering and farm machinery group, fell to DM2.1bn (\$1.15bn) in the first six months of 1987 from DM2.3bn in the same period last year.

However, despite the "unchanged difficult circumstances" in all its major business areas, the company expects to maintain group turnover this year at around the DM4.9bn reported for 1986 as a whole, thanks to higher new order levels, which rose 8 per cent in the first half of 1987. Foreign new orders rose 9 per cent in value to DM942m, while domestic orders were 6 per cent higher at DM678m.

KHD's operating profits, which were not given for the interim period, should improve this year, the group said, after slipping into the red in 1986. The company intends to continue its "adjustment strategy" so far as costs and capacity are concerned. KHD's workforce decreased by 864 to 18,076 during the latest half-year.

### New England banks in interstate merger

BY GORDON CRAMB IN NEW YORK

TWO New England banks have announced an interstate merger which they said would create the 21st largest bank holding company in the US, with assets of more than \$25bn.

Shawmut, based in Massachusetts, and Hartford National, which operates Connecticut National Bank, are to combine through a share exchange in what they described as "a merger of equals."

Shawmut, the smaller of the two with assets of \$10bn, will see its name survive in the new Shawmut National, with shareholders in the Boston institution receiving 1.8

shares in the new company for each Shawmut share held. Holders of Hartford stock will be offered Shawmut National shares on a one-for-one basis.

The two banks have also come to a mutual options agreement allowing each to buy unissued shares in the other representing up to a quarter of fully diluted equity.

"Our organisations will continue to serve their individual markets, while together as a corporation we will offer expanded financial products on a more competitive and efficient basis," the bank said.

### Olida-Caby launches restructuring

OLIDA-CABY, the leading French character group, has launched its financial restructuring plan after the losses in 1986 which almost wiped out its capital base.

The group will first write down its capital by half and then raise FF198m (\$33m) of new funds by a two-for-three equity issue. This will be followed by a FF1250m issue of bonds with attached warrants.

Mr Jean-Louis Riallin, Olida's new chairman, said the company, which lost FF115m in 1986, had reduced losses in the first half of this year compared with the same period of 1986.

NEW ISSUE

This announcement appears as a matter of record only.

August, 1987



**SUMITOMO CONSTRUCTION CO., LTD.**

**U.S.\$50,000,000**

**3 per cent. Guaranteed Notes due 1992**

with

**Warrants**

to subscribe for shares of common stock of Sumitomo Construction Co., Ltd.

Payment of principal and interest being unconditionally and irrevocably guaranteed by

**The Sumitomo Bank, Limited**

ISSUE PRICE: 100 PER CENT.

**Daiwa Europe Limited**

**Sumitomo Finance International**

**The Nikko Securities Co., (Europe) Ltd.**

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**Westdeutsche Landesbank Girozentrale**

This announcement appears as a matter of record only.

New Issue

25th August, 1987



**FUJISAWA PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANY LIMITED**

**U.S. \$100,000,000**

**3 per cent. Notes due 1992**

with

**Warrants**

to subscribe for shares of common stock of Fujisawa Pharmaceutical Company Limited

Issue Price 100 per cent.

**Yamaichi International (Europe) Limited**

**Tokai International Limited**

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**Merrill Lynch Capital Markets**

**Morgan Stanley International**

**Nomura International Limited**

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**Daiwa Europe Limited**

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**Mitsubishi Finance International Limited**

**Samuel Montagu & Co. Limited**

**Morgan Grenfell & Co. Limited**

**J.P. Morgan Securities Asia Ltd.**

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**The Nikko Securities Co., (Europe) Ltd.**

**Salomon Brothers International Limited**

**J. Henry Schroder Wagg & Co. Limited**

**Shearson Lehman Brothers International**







## INTL. COMPANIES and FINANCE

## Renison Goldfields ahead on mineral sands and gold

BY BRUCE JACQUES IN SYDNEY

RENISON GOLDFIELDS Consolidated (RGC), the diversified Australian miner, whose major shareholder is Consolidated Goldfields of the UK, has confirmed its resurgence from a mid-1980's profit slump.

With mineral sands and gold as the star performers, RGC lifted after-tax profits 133.6 per cent from A\$21.1m to A\$48.2m (US\$35.2m) in the June year. Shareholders will share in the spoils with the company maintaining the annual dividend at 15c a share, but paying most of it on capital increased more than 60

per cent by two bonus issues during the year. Payout is up from A\$11.1m to A\$17.2m.

The mineral sands division dominated pre-tax earnings, which jumped from A\$40.8m to A\$63.8m on the back of both production and price increases. The year also marked RGC's first appreciable earnings from gold with the 60 per cent-owned Pine Creek gold mine in the Northern Territory lifting its contribution from a negligible A\$286,000 to A\$16m.

Earnings at the company's Tasmanian tin operations were lifted from A\$2.5m to A\$4.5m despite chaos in international

tin markets. But earnings from the Mount Lyell mine in Tasmania fell from A\$1.5m to A\$522,000.

The other major contribution to results came from investment operations where earnings grew from A\$2.1m to A\$8.1m, largely through trading in buoyant share markets.

Mr Campbell Anderson, RGC managing director, served notice that the company was poised for further expansion. He said RGC was highly liquid with cash reserves of close to A\$200m following the profit, and a recent A\$100m convertible note issue.

## Lower exports hit Trans-Natal earnings

By Jim Jones in Johannesburg

TRANS-NATAL, South Africa's second-largest coal mining group, suffered a halving of its after-tax profit in the year to June 30, mainly because of poorer export market conditions.

Total domestic and export sales rose to \$2.25m tonnes, from 21.57m tonnes in the previous financial year, but operating profits before amortisation, finance charges and tax dropped to R237.5m (\$114.7m), from R333.4m. The pre-tax profit was \$146.8m, against \$272m.

Mr Steve Ellis, the chairman, says that export income was affected by lower prices and a strengthening of the rand against the dollar. He has not said whether export sales (tonnages have been hurt by trade sanctions, nor has he mentioned the possible strike on the current financial year's operations.

Trans-Natal exports most of its coal through the port of Richards Bay, where plans to expand coal-handling facilities have been shelved in view of the poor state of export markets.

Earnings have fallen to 88 cents a share, from 161 cents, and the year's dividend has been cut to 60 cents from 90 cents. Trans-Natal is controlled by Geacor, the second largest of South Africa's mining houses.

## Toyota Motor down 18%

BY YOKO SHIBATA IN TOKYO

TOYOTA MOTOR reported unconsolidated pre-tax profits of ¥38.91bn (\$2.73bn) in the year to June 30, 1987, down 18.5 per cent from the previous year. Net profits were 21.5 per cent lower at ¥20.21bn. Sales for the past year were ¥70.819bn, down 4.4 per cent from the previous year.

This was the first profit drop since the company was established in 1982 through a merger of Toyota Motor and Toyota Motor Sales, and was blamed on reduced exports caused by the appreciation of the yen.

Toyota's domestic car sales increased 4 per cent to 1.73m, thanks to sales promotion efforts.

However, exports fell 8.4 per cent to 1.8m, due to a sharp drop in sales to the US which outweighed an increase in European sales.

Operating profits declined by 24.5 per cent, to ¥248.38bn. Toyota spelled out the factors contributing to the decrease in operating profits as follows: currency exchange rate losses — ¥270bn; increased personnel costs — ¥29bn; higher depreciation costs — ¥26bn. The

factors contributing to increased operating profits were: rationalisation — ¥160bn; sales promotion — ¥60bn; lower business tax — ¥24bn.

Toyota will pay an annual dividend of ¥18.5 per share — ¥12 ordinary dividend, ¥4 extraordinary dividend and ¥2.5 in commemorative dividend to mark the 50th anniversary of the company's founding in November.

For the current fiscal year to June 1988, Toyota sees maintained pre-tax profits and an annual turnover of ¥8,000bn, down 0.4 per cent.

## Malaysian bank offering

BY WONG SULONG IN KUALA LUMPUR

BANK OF COMMERCE, owned by Flier Group, an investment arm of the ruling United Malays National Organisation, has announced a public offer of 14.6m.

It is the second bank to get a listing on the Kuala Lumpur stock exchange this year. Shares of Southern Bank, controlled by the Selangor royal family, will be traded on the exchange for the first time next week.

Bank of Commerce's one ringgit shares are to be sold

at 1.8 ringgit each, and will increase paid-up capital from 58m ringgit to 72.6m ringgit.

The bank expects to make a pre-tax profit of 13.9m ringgit (US\$5.56m) for the year to August 1988, giving the new shares a prospective price/earnings ratio of 9.4.

Bank of Commerce was started by a Chinese family in the East Malaysian state of Sarawak in 1924. It was taken over by the Flier Group in 1979.

## Rand Merchant improves

BY OUR JOHANNESBURG CORRESPONDENT

RAND MERCHANT BANK (RMB), the privately owned South African banking company, increased disclosed after-tax profit to R13m (\$8.2m) in the year to June 30, from R10m in the previous year. The profit is stated after undisclosed transfers from and to hidden reserves.

The directors say the corporate finance division achieved record results due to a spate of new listings on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange and 20 foreign companies divesting

from South Africa. The project finance division benefited from a resurgence of capital spending in some sectors of the economy. Additional capital of between R30m and R40m is to be raised.

Banking analysts in Johannesburg expect the additional capital to be raised by means of a public offer of shares.

RMB's earnings rose to 81.4 cents a share from 63.6 cents and the dividend has been increased to 28 cents from 20 cents.

**Ente Nazionale per l'Energia Elettrica**  
U.S. \$300,000,000  
Floating Rate Notes Due 2005  
Unconditionally guaranteed as to payment of principal and interest by  
**The Republic of Italy**  
In accordance with the provisions of the Notes, notice is hereby given that the Rate of Interest has been fixed at 7.016875% for the Interest Determination Period 28th August, 1987 to 30th September, 1987. Interest accrued for this Determination Period and payable 30th November, 1987 will amount to U.S.\$64.32 per U.S.\$10,000 Note and U.S.\$1,608.03 per U.S.\$250,000 Note.  
Agent Bank:  
Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York  
London

**U.S. \$1,000,000,000**  
**The Kingdom of Denmark**  
Floating Rate Notes Due 1996  
In accordance with the provisions of the Notes, notice is hereby given that for the Interest Period from 28th August, 1987 to 29th February, 1988 the Rate of Interest on the Notes will be 7% per annum. The interest payable on the relevant interest payment date, 29th February, 1988 will be U.S.\$59.72 per U.S.\$10,000 Note and U.S.\$8,993.06 per U.S.\$250,000 Note.  
Agent Bank:  
Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York  
London

**Wells Fargo International Financing Corporation N.V.**  
U.S. \$50,000,000  
Guaranteed Floating Rate Subordinated Notes due 1996  
In accordance with the provisions of the Notes, notice is hereby given that for the Interest Sub-period 28th August, 1987 to 30th September, 1987 the Notes will carry an Interest Rate of 7 1/4% per annum. The interest payable on the above period and payable on 30th October, 1987 will be U.S\$64.74.  
Agent Bank:  
Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York  
London

**Wells Fargo & Company**  
U.S. \$150,000,000  
Floating Rate Subordinated Notes due 1992  
In accordance with the provisions of the Notes, notice is hereby given that for the Interest period 28th August, 1987 to 30th September, 1987 the Notes will carry an Interest Rate of 6-9125% per annum. Interest payable on the relevant interest payment date 30th September, 1987 will amount to U.S\$63.36 per U.S\$10,000 Note.  
Agent Bank:  
Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York  
London

**U.S. \$300,000,000**  
**Woodside Financial Services Ltd.**  
(Incorporated in the State of Victoria)  
Guaranteed Floating Rate Notes due February 1987  
Unconditionally Guaranteed by  
**The Industrial Bank of Japan, Ltd.**  
In accordance with the Terms and Conditions of the Notes, notice is hereby given, that for the Interest Period from August 28, 1987 to November 30, 1987 the Notes will carry an Interest Rate of 7% per annum. The amount payable on November 30, 1987 will be U.S. \$4,589.44 and U.S. \$182.78 respectively for Notes in denominations of U.S. \$250,000 and U.S. \$10,000.  
By: The Chase Manhattan Bank, N.A.  
London, Agent Bank

**U.S. \$250,000,000**  
**Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce**  
(A Canadian Chartered Bank)  
Floating Rate Deposit Notes due 2005  
In accordance with the provisions of the Notes, notice is hereby given, that for the Interest Period from March 26, 1987 to September 28, 1987 the rate for the final Interest Sub-period from August 28, 1987 to September 28, 1987 has been determined at 7 1/4% per annum, and therefore the amount of interest payable against Coupon No. 5 on the relevant interest payment date September 28, 1987 will be U.S. \$372.08.  
By: The Chase Manhattan Bank, N.A.  
London, Agent Bank

**U.S. \$20,000,000**  
**Empresas La Moderna S.A. de C.V.**  
(Incorporated in the United Mexican States)  
Floating Rate Notes due 1988  
In accordance with the provisions of the Notes notice is hereby given that for the Interest Period from August 28, 1987 to February 28, 1988 the Notes will carry an Interest Rate of 8% per annum. The interest payable on the relevant interest payment date, February 28, 1988 against Coupon No. 13 will be U.S. \$411.71.  
By: The Chase Manhattan Bank, N.A.  
London, Agent Bank

**U.S. \$600,000,000**  
**Lloyds Bank Plc**  
(Incorporated in England with limited liability)  
Primary Capital Undated Floating Rate Notes (Series 3)  
For the six months 28th August, 1987 to 29th February, 1988 the Notes will carry an interest rate of 7.35% p.a. with a Coupon Amount of U.S. \$377.71 payable on 29th February, 1988.  
By: The Chase Manhattan Bank, N.A.  
London, Agent Bank

**U.S. \$100,000,000**  
**Eldorado Nuclear Limited**  
Floating Rate Notes due 1989  
In accordance with the provisions of the Notes, notice is hereby given that for the period from August 28, 1987 to February 28, 1988, the Notes will carry an Interest Rate of 7 1/4% per annum. The interest payable on the relevant interest payment date, February 28, 1988, will be U.S. \$106.28 per \$5,000 Bearer Note/\$5,000 principal amount in Registered form.  
By: The Chase Manhattan Bank, N.A.  
London, Agent Bank

**IRELAND**  
U.S\$300,000,000 Floating Rate Notes due 1997  
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that for the Interest Period commencing 28th August, 1987 the Notes will bear interest at the rate of 7 1/4% per annum. The interest payable on 28th February, 1988 against relevant Coupon will be U.S\$ 378.99 per U.S\$10,000 nominal and U.S\$ 9,474.83 per U.S\$250,000 nominal.  
Agent Bank:  
Bank of America International Limited

**U.S. \$150,000,000**  
**Homestead Savings**  
A Federal Savings and Loan Association  
Collateralized Floating Rate Notes Due 1995  
Interest Rate 8% per annum  
Interest Period 28th August 1987 to 30th November 1987  
Interest Amount per U.S. \$10,000 Note due 30th November 1987 U.S. \$2,088.88  
Credit Suisse First Boston Limited  
Agent Bank

**U.S. \$200,000,000**  
**Bergen Bank A/S**  
Perpetual Floating Rate Notes (with the right to subordinate)  
In accordance with the provisions of the Notes, notice is hereby given that for the six months Interest Period from August 28, 1987 to February 28, 1988 the Notes will carry an Interest Rate of 7 1/4% per annum. The interest payable on the relevant interest payment date, February 28, 1988, will be U.S. \$378.99 per U.S. \$10,000 principal amount of Notes.  
By: The Chase Manhattan Bank, N.A.  
London, Agent Bank

**FIRST BANK SYSTEM, INC.**  
U.S\$200,000,000  
Subordinated Floating Rate Notes due 2010  
Notice is hereby given that for the Interest Period from 28th August 1987 to 30th November 1987 the Notes will carry an Interest Rate of 7 1/4 per cent per annum and that the interest payable on the relevant Interest Payment Date, 30th November 1987 will amount to U.S\$186.04 per U.S\$10,000 Note and U.S\$4,651.04 per U.S\$250,000 Note.  
Agent Bank:  
Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York  
London

**U.S. \$100,000,000**  
**First Bank System, Inc.**  
Floating Rate Subordinated Capital Notes Due 1997  
Interest Rate 7 1/8% per annum  
Interest Period 28th August 1987 to 30th November 1987  
Interest Amount per U.S. \$50,000 Note due 30th November 1987 U.S. \$930.21  
Credit Suisse First Boston Limited  
Agent Bank

**U.S. \$100,000,000**  
**First Bank System, Inc.**  
Floating Rate Subordinated Capital Notes Due 1997  
Interest Rate 7 1/8% per annum  
Interest Period 28th August 1987 to 30th November 1987  
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Credit Suisse First Boston Limited  
Agent Bank

**U.S. \$100,000,000**  
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## UK COMPANY NEWS

## Core growth lifts Ladbroke 81%

BY CLAY HARRIS

Ladbroke Group yesterday reported record interim pre-tax profits of £25.2m, an 81 per cent increase on the £13.9m achieved in the first half of 1986. Earnings per share soared by 40 per cent to 11.17p from 8p after adjustment for the three-for-10 rights issue in April.

Mr Cyril Stein, chairman, said the group's four core activities—betting, hotels, property and DIY retailing—were all prospering in growing markets, although Ladbroke gave no divisional breakdown of turnover and profits. Overall turnover rose by 24 per cent to £269.7m (£178.9m).

"The excellent results demonstrate our ability to achieve consistent earnings growth," Mr Stein said.

The strong pre-tax advance reflects in part Ladbroke's de-

liberate move away from activities with profit contributions heavily biased towards the second half and is unlikely to be matched in the full year, although many analysts now expect a 50 per cent rise over 1986.

Estimated profits from Texas Homecare, for example, are believed to be double the total contribution last year from 10 weeks of the DIY chain as well as Lasky's, the electrical retailer, and Ladbroke's bingo clubs, both subsequently sold.

Ladbroke has still not touched the £294m proceeds of its rights issue, although it helped to reduce interest costs to £11.3m (£13.7m).

Of two companies currently available with expected £600m-plus price tags, Ladbroke confirmed its interest in the 94 Hilton International hotels being sold by Allegis, the US air-

line and travel group, but said it would not pursue MFI, the furniture chain which is being divorced from Asda.

Ladbroke expects to be among perhaps four serious contenders for the Hilton hotels when the field narrows from the current three dozen suitors.

Investment in the group's existing hotels, mostly now four-star operations, raised tariff levels and occupancy rates in the first half.

Ladbroke yesterday announced a £25m joint venture to redevelop 130,000 sq ft at Angel Gate, Islington, near the City. Property developments were expanding rapidly in the US and Europe. London & Leeds, the US subsidiary, had 2m sq ft completed or under construction and were planning another 1m sq ft of developments by the end of 1988.

Retail betting operations had

maintained UK market leadership in a half which saw excellent trading. Live race-casting by Satellite Information Service, the company partly owned by Ladbroke, had been well received.

Sales had been consistently good at Texas, which was increasing its selling space to 5m sq ft by the end of the year and 6m sq ft by the end of 1988.

An extraordinary credit of £19.7m was similar to the £20.2m figure last year and reflected the net proceeds of disposals of non-core activities including a 20 per cent stake in Central Television and the Rodeway Inns motel franchise operation in the US.

The interim dividend is once again increased by 10 per cent to 6.05p (5.5p). Ladbroke shares added 1p to 445p.

See Lex

## WPP pays up to £23m for three acquisitions

By Nikki Tait

WPP, the UK marketing services company which two months ago won a £55m bid for the substantially larger Madison Avenue-based JWT Group, yesterday returned to the acquisition trail with the purchase of two non-media advertising companies in the US and a graphics and design business in the UK.

WPP's share price has been clouded by the overhang of stock following a heavy £21m rights issue—two-thirds of which was left with the underwriters—to fund JWT. However, the latest acquisitions are relatively small, involving a possible maximum consideration of about £25m, and will be paid for on a staggered basis, predominantly in cash.

Yesterday WPP shares strengthened 5p to 336p.

The two US acquisitions, Reese Communications Companies and Targeting Systems, augment WPP's below-the-line businesses in the States, currently co-ordinated through its Raser Communications subsidiary. Both started in 1966 and 1978 respectively—two consulting firms for political candidates, but have since shifted to serving corporate clients.

RCC specialises in "issues marketing", in particular, crisis management and crisis response; TSI applies these techniques to commercial marketing, as well as developing demographic and attitudinal research. Clients currently include Philip Morris, A&T, Georgia Power, Drew Barrymore, Lambert and Gulf States Utilities. In the year to end-February, combined revenues totalled \$14.4m, and pre-tax profits, \$3.5m.

The overall maximum purchase price is \$35m, and the actual figure will be based on a 10 times multiple of the average post-tax profit for the three years to end February 1992.

WPP is paying \$14m in cash up front with the rest spread over three years—probably funded two-thirds in cash and one-third in shares. Post-acquisition, Mr Matthew Shaw, WPP's chairman and major shareholder in both companies, will join the board of Raser.

The UK purchase is Greaves Hall, which provides graphics and design services; clients include Digital, Kraft, Rascal and Rank Xerox. Sales in 1986 were \$135,000 and adjusted pre-tax profits \$30,000. Again payment will be pre-related, subject to a maximum of \$1.5m. WPP is paying \$233,000 now—£250,000 in cash and £23,000 in shares—with the rest similarly staggered.

Both deals were already in the pipeline when JWT stole the limelight. Yesterday, to help tackle the expanded group, WPP announced five new appointments to its financial team—giving it a central 10 in the UK and five in the US.

## Acquisitions boost Marley interim profits to £25m

BY DAVID WALLER

Marley, the much restructured building materials group, has increased its profits for the six months ended June 30 by more than two and a half times.

Boosted by recent acquisitions, the £15.4m rise in taxable profits to £25.1m was in line with City forecasts and the shares rose 2p to close at 181p.

"We have completely changed the shape of the company," said Mr George Russell, chief executive. "There is no longer the traditional imbalance between profits in the first and second halves."

He said that Marley's dependence on buoyant new housing markets was lessening as it undertook more work in the refurbishing market, trading (£4.4m), 30.1 per cent of taxable profits, down from the 45.3 per cent charge in the same period last year, due mainly to the use of prior year tax losses.

Turnover rose by £8.7m to

£277.1m (£268.4m). The interim dividend was increased by 17.8 per cent to 1.65p per share.

Of total operating profits of £28.9m (£15.2m), some £14m came from Thermatite, General Shale and Nottingham Brick, the three companies bought for a total of over £150m in the last year.

Included in last year's operating profits was a £1.7m contribution from Payline Marley's former DIY subsidiary which was sold to Ward White for £24m in March.

Profits for the company's traditional tiling business were £3.2m ahead at £4.9m, against £2.2m in the same period last year.

The tax charge was £7.6m (£4.4m), 30.1 per cent of taxable profits, down from the 45.3 per cent charge in the same period last year, due mainly to the use of prior year tax losses.

available in the US. Interest payable declined from £4.5m to £3.5m, and after minorities of £60,000 (£802,000), profit attributable to Marley shareholders was £17.6m (£5.6m). Earnings per share more than trebled, from 2.2p to 6.7p.

Marley has sold its 53 per cent stake in CPI Holdings, an Irish quoted company, to a consortium led by CFI's chairman, Mr Michael Chadwick. The consortium paid IR£76p a share for Marley's 6.4m shares, which will give rise to a book loss of £2.5m to be treated as an extraordinary item in Marley's full year accounts.

CPI announced yesterday that it had reversed losses of £2345,000 made in the first half last year to make a pre-tax profit of £137,000, on £222.3m (£232.8m).

See Lex

## Elders Resources buys first UK holding

BY TERRY POVEY

Australia's Elders Resources, a 48 per cent owned quoted associate of Elders IXL, has taken a 9 per cent stake in Sutcliffe Speakman, the UK activated carbon, solvent recovery plant design and chemical trading company.

This is ER's first reported in-

vestment in a public company in the UK and at present it has only a metal trading operation in London called Elders Extrad.

The stake in Sutcliffe was acquired through the purchase of 1.5m new shares issued at 180p to the Australian company. Sutcliffe is the world's oldest maker of activated carbon, a

key element in filtration processes of all kinds, and has long had a trading relationship with Elders.

ER's main Australian interests are in gold and other mining projects and in the international trading of minerals.

Recovery and filtration tech-

niques have important applications in the resources field and along with the share subscription, which is subject to shareholders' approval, both companies also announced that they have entered into "various joint ventures."

On news of the link-up with ER, Sutcliffe's shares rose 38p to close at 193p.

## Lacklustre response to Norton Opax rights

BY CLAY HARRIS

Norton Opax yesterday joined a growing list of companies which have received less than majority support for recent rights issues. The specialist printing and packaging group said that applications had been received for only 45.1 per cent of the £40m convertible preference shares on offer.

The applications include, however, the 23.5 per cent holding for which Mr Robert Maxwell had irrevocably agreed to take up before the offer was launched in July. This allowed Norton to save an estimated £250,000 in underwriting costs.

Samuel Montagu, Norton's merchant bank, indicated yesterday that the issue had been intended not only to fund planned acquisitions in North

America but also to widen the ownership of the shares. The outcome was not especially disappointing.

The £127m offer by Brent Walker, the property and leisure group, to fund its purchase of casinos from Lomro, fared considerably better. Shareholders subscribed for 85.5 per cent of the convertible preference shares available.

Another indication of shareholder sentiment will come with the outcome of the £122m rights issue by Ratners, the jewellery group, which closed yesterday. At 333p last night, Ratners shares continued their recovery to well above the 510p rights price.

Ratners' previous £82m rights issue on the same terms won a 81 per cent take-up when it closed last month.

## Guinness Peat battle awaits Stock Exchange decision

BY TERRY POVEY

THE BATTLE between Guinness Peat Group and its major shareholder, Equicorp, has shifted towards the Stock Exchange over a release giving details of the incentives scheme.

It appears that the Exchange accepted GP's contention that the initial sale of 5 per cent of Guinness Mahon was not material to the group. However, the Exchange asked for the issue of the option over a further 45 per cent of the merchant bank, not due until 1992 at the earliest, to be put to the vote within 16 months. If shareholders defeat the scheme, GP has agreed to pay £4m compensation to the management team.

Equicorp argues that the proposed contract should be viewed as a whole and is therefore material now. The Exchange is believed to be reconsidering its position in the light of this.

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## Thornton Pacific argues its case

BY NIKKI TAIT

Thornton Pacific Investment Fund, the £72m Luxembourg-based investment company which is making a hostile £237m bid for TR Pacific Basin Investment Trust, said yesterday that its proposals would allow shareholders to realise 97.3 per cent of the underlying net asset value of their shares—but that the percentage could be higher if TR Pacific waives a golden parachute termination agreement.

According to the Thornton offer document, posted yesterday, the costs of its scheme would amount to 2.8 per cent of

TR Pacific's asset value immediately before its portfolio is realised. Of that, however, 0.9 per cent is accounted for by a termination charge payable to Touche Bannett. If this were waived the total cost would be 1.9 per cent, and shareholders could get 98.1 per cent of nav.

The Thornton document argues that its proposals—which would allow shareholders either to cash immediately or to accept shares or warrants in Thornton Pacific, which as an open-ended company trades at net asset value—combine "the most

favourable attributes of a unit trust and an investment trust."

Mr Richard Thornton, chairman of the company, added that the initial soundings from institutional investors in the trust have been encouraging. "The scheme, however, could be 'through and finished' in 60-90 days."

TR, however, has already promised that it will come up with alternative proposals which will be more flexible and attractive. Yesterday, directors of the fund were meeting to discuss their response.

## Robt Lowe pays £3.2m for Wescot textile side

BY HOMA THOMPSON

Robert H. Lowe, clothing manufacturer, has bought the textile interests of The Wescot Group, namely Woodstock Neckwear, Wescot Textiles, Wescot Leisurewear and Wescot Shirts, for £3.2m.

In 1986 the four companies jointly made profits before tax and management charges of £478,000 on turnover of £15.76m. Although unaudited accounts including Wescot and Leisurewear show sales, results to October this year will be substantially affected by the costs of closing Wescot Leisurewear's loss-making German operation. The acquisitions should boost

the already substantial business done with Marks and Spencer. Woodstock Neckwear makes silk ties, primarily for M and S and House of Fraser; Wescot Textiles is a leisurewear manufacturer; the leading casual clothes of which is Market Westcot Shirts makes boys' shirts, principally for M and S and Wescot Leisurewear supplies casual clothes to the retail trade including Next and Leys.

The purchase is being financed by the issue of 1.96m shares which have been conditionally placed. Existing shareholders will have first refusal at 22 each on a four-for-nine basis.

## BP buys PT Wheelock Marden

BP has acquired the Indonesian contract manufacturing company PT Wheelock Marden through its subsidiary BP Detergents.

Wheelock manufacturers household and personal care products on behalf of leading multinational companies.

This purchase, together with the recently announced acquisition of the Malaysia-based UINZ, makes personal care products, will give BP Detergents a strong manufacturing base in the Pacific Basin both for supplying domestic markets and for export.

## Press Tools nears £0.5m

Press Tools lifted its profit from £401,000 to £498,000 in the year ended April 30 1987 and is raising the dividend from 2.5p to 3p, with a final of 2p.

Order books were healthy, the directors said, and they were hopeful that further progress would be made in the current year.

Should the offer by the Fremont Group become unconditional, it would acquire a substantial holding. This impending development was welcomed by the directors.

Each ADS will represent two of United's ordinary shares. The listing is sponsored by First Boston, which will also be one of the US market makers.

## United Newspapers

United Newspapers shares will begin trading on the US Nasdaq over-the-counter market on September 15. The American depositary receipt listing does not involve the issue of any additional United shares.

Each ADS will represent two of United's ordinary shares. The listing is sponsored by First Boston, which will also be one of the US market makers.

## Microlease buyout bid

SHARES in Microlease, the electronic equipment rental group, leapt 12p to 150p yesterday after the company announced the possibility of a management buyout at that level.

The company made the announcement after its share price had risen from a level of less than 120p earlier this month. Certain members of the board have made the bid approach and the independent directors are currently considering the merits of the offer.

In the year to February 28 1987 the group's profits fell from £552,000 to £485,000.

TCB

TCB Limited

£30,000,000

Tender Panel Facility

arranged by

N M Rothschild &amp; Sons Limited

Tender Panel Members

Alexanders Discount p.l.c.

Banca Nazionale del Lavoro  
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Credit Suisse

Deutsche Bank Aktiengesellschaft  
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TSB England &amp; Wales plc

Amsterdam-Rotterdam Bank N.V.  
London Branch

Cater Allen Limited

Daiwa Europe Finance PLC

DG BANK Deutsche Genossenschaftsbank  
London Branch

Swiss Bank Corporation

Union Discount Company Limited



Tender Panel Agent

N M Rothschild &amp; Sons Limited

August, 1987

## DIVIDENDS ANNOUNCED

Company	Current Dividend	Date of Payment	Corresponding Dividend	Total Dividend	Total Dividend for Last Year
Alida	2.5	Oct 15	2.25	4.75	8
AMEC	4.75	Dec 31	4.5	9.25	12
Charles Barber	11.1	Oct 30	1	12.1	3
Barr & Arnold	3	Oct 30	2	5	8
Bullers	0.5	Oct 15	0.5	1	0.4
Dunlop Group	20.3	Oct 19	0.24	20.54	0.4
James Fisher	1.7	Oct 31	1.65	3.35	2
Ladbroke Group	6.05	Nov 13	5.5	11.55	12.5
Lee Refrigeration	4	Oct 30	4	8	12.5
Marley	1.65	Oct 30	1.4	3.05	41
Trent Holdings	0.59	Oct 15	1.87	2.46	115
Press Tools	2.5	Oct 15	2.5	5	2.5

Dividends shown pence per share net except where otherwise stated. \* Equivalent after allowing for scrip issue. † On capital increased by rights and/or acquisition issues. ‡ US\$ stock. § Unquoted stock. ¶ Third market.

U.S. \$460,000,000



Azienda Autonoma delle Ferrovie dello Stato

Floating Rate Notes due 1995

By virtue of existing legislation direct and unconditional general obligations of The Republic of Italy

Notice is hereby given that the interest payable on the relevant Interest Payment Date September 30, 1987, against Coupon No. 5 in respect of U.S.\$10,000 Nominal of the Notes will be U.S.\$364.51 and in respect of U.S.\$250,000 Nominal of the Notes will be U.S.\$9,112.43.

August 28, 1987, London  
By: Citibank, N.A. (CSSI Dept.), Agent Bank

CITIBANK

The Chase Manhattan Corporation

U.S. \$175,000,000

Floating Rate Subordinated Notes due 1997

Notice is hereby given that the Rate of Interest has been fixed at 7.25% and that the interest payable on the relevant Interest Payment Date November 30, 1987 against Coupon No. 8 in respect of U.S.\$10,000 nominal of the Notes will be U.S.\$189.31.

August 28, 1987, London  
By: Citibank, N.A. (CSSI Dept.), Agent Bank

CITIBANK

GRANVILLE

SPONSORED SECURITIES

High Low	Company	Price	Change	div. (p)	%	P/E
208 133	Ass. Brit. Ind. Ordinary	203	—	7.3	3.6	12.4
208 146	Ass. Brit. Ind. CUS	203	—	10.0	4.8	—
40 34	Avonage and Rhodes	38	—	4.2	11.1	5.3
142 67	BIB Design Group (USA)	147	—	2.1	1.8	17.5
167 108	Bardon Group	167	—	2.7	1.6	28.5
180 95	Bray Technologies	180	+ 5	4.7	2.6	14.4
281 130	CCL Group Ordinary	281	—	11.5	4.4	6.7
141 89	CCL Group 10pc Conv. Pref.	141	—	15.7	11.1	—
171 126	Carborundum Ordinary	171	—	5.4	3.1	14.9
102 91	Carborundum 10pc Pref.	102	+ 2	16.2	10.5	—
128 87	George Blair	128	—	3.7	—	3.3
143 119	ISIS Group	143	—	—	—	—
76 89	Jackson Group	75	—	3.4	4.5	8.3
444 321	James Burrough	444	—	18.2	4.1	10.1
87 60	James Burrough Spv Pref.	87	—	12.9	13.3	—
78 60	Multibase N.V. (Amst)	78	—	—	—	21.4
550 351	Record Ridgway Ordinary	550	+ 1	1.4	—	11.1
86 83	Record Ridgway 10pc Pref.	86	—	14.1	16.4	—
91 69	Robert Jenkins	89	—	—	—	3.0
124 42	Scurtison	124	—	—	—	—
220 141	Tandey and Carlisle	220	—	6.6	3.0	10.7
42 32	Trafalgar Holdings	42	—	0.8	1.8	3.9
171 23	Unilever Holdings (S)	171	—	2.8	2.6	19.8
221 115	Walter Alexander	221	—	5.9	2.7	16.4
198 130	W. S. Yates	195	—	17.4	8.9	19.5
176 96	West Yorks Ind. Hosp. (USA)	176	—	5.5	4.2	14.0

Securities designated (SS) and (USM) are dealt in subject to the rules and regulations of The Stock Exchange. Other securities listed above are dealt in subject to the rules of FIMBRA.

Granville & Co. Limited  
8 Lower Lane, London EC3R 8EP  
Telephone 01-621 1212  
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Granville Davies Coleman Limited  
27 Lower Lane, London EC3R 8DT  
Telephone 01-621 1212  
Member of the Stock Exchange



## City disappointed with AMEC's profit increase

AMEC, the construction group, improved its pre-tax profit by only £700,000 to £15.1m in the first half of 1987, and disappointed the City.

The profit was some 51m below expectations, and the shares reacted with a 15p mark-down to 342p. The civil engineering side suffered from lumpy profits and the adverse weather.

Mr J. W. Morgan, chairman, said overall the group had maintained a steady underlying improvement, and results were consistent with the medium term planned rate of growth. Order books remained high and provided a sound basis for the future.

The group had retained a positive net cash position despite using a significant proportion of the surplus to fund expansion in housebuilding and property development.

The chairman said that overall performance of the core businesses, and investments in new areas were progressing as planned. With opportunities

for growth emerging, he remained confident in the profitable development of the group.

Turnover in the half year came to £358.8m (£351.9m). Earnings worked through at 13.2p (12.3p) and the interim dividend is 4.75p net (4.5p).

A break down of the profit showed building and civil engineering £6.6m (£6.1m), mechanical and electrical engineering £3.2m (£2.3m), and property development and housing £5.3m (£2m).

Fairclough Building performed strongly, taking advantage of the buoyant south eastern market. Results of civil engineering were reduced because of the start-up costs of several new major contracts.

The fall in AMEC's civil engineering profits could attract too much attention. Under Alan Cockshaw's direction the group

is clearly repositioning itself so that within a couple of years property development and housing will be challenging for leading profit centre status and the civil side will have learnt to cut its suit to fit the cloth.

Household associate Fairclough Homes, should double by 1988 to 2,000 units and the development portfolio carries a £180m sale price tag. However, the first gains from property development will not flow in until next year and in the mean time the lumpiness of conservatively taken contract profits will have an erratic impact on the pre-tax line.

Further, interest received will fall as the average cash balance this year will be around half that of 1986 due to a circa £50m spend on housing and development sites. On forecasts of £34m, the shares at 342p are on a prospective 9/16 of 10; for 1988, £41m pre-tax would produce a multiple of just over 8. Factoring in market ratings for the group's divisions for 1988 suggests that the shares could be as much as 70p short of justice.

## Inoco £14m rights and disposal

BY PHILIP COGGAN

Inoco announced a further stage in its reconstruction yesterday with a £13.8m rights issue and details of the sale of its Colombian oil and gas interests to Jackson Exploration.

The group joined the market in November 1985 with interests in oil and gas but the fall in the price of oil and a failed bid for a similar company, Petrol, blighted the prospects of the group.

Earlier this year, Inoco built up its asset base by acquiring properties worth £20m and the proceeds of the rights issue will be used to pay off the bulk of its £16.7m worth of borrowings.

Consideration for the sale of the Colombian interests will be 21m ordinary shares in Jackson, leaving Inoco with a 20 per cent stake.

Mr David Hudd, who was appointed chairman and chief executive in March, said that the Colombian sale would cut overheads and with the rental income from its properties and its remaining US oil and gas interests, Inoco would now have a strong asset base and cash flow.

Under the three-for-five issue, the rights shares are being offered at 45p compared with the 62p at which the shares closed on Wednesday.

The issue is being under-

written by Interalliance Bank, Zurich, apart from 6m shares which are being taken up by the Monaco Group Fund, leaving the latter with a 19 per cent stake in the enlarged group.

Inoco also announced its interim results which showed a small loss of £33,000 in the six months to June 30. Gross profit was £171,000 (£404,000) on turnover of £710,000 (£1,020m) and net rental income on the group's property portfolio was £248,000 (£nil).

But after deducting administrative expenses of £264,000 (£275,000) interest payments of £188,000 (£18,000) and tax of £28,000 (£70,000), the loss per share was 0.17p (6.8p).

## Refuge premiums up to £77m

BY NICK BUNKER

Refuge Group, the industrial life assurance company, has raised its interim dividend by 15 per cent to 5.75p, after a 14 per cent rise in total life premiums to £77.6m in the six months to June 30.

Refuge does not report an earnings figure until after the year-end actuarial valuation. The share price closed up 15p at 551p last night.

Manchester-based Refuge said ordinary branch new annual premiums rose 60 per cent to £5.9m, mainly because of sales for two months earlier this year of a new five-year-term endowment policy.

Total ordinary branch

premiums were up 12 per cent at £18.53m. Premiums for unit-linked products rose from £16.91m to £22.14m.

Industrial branch premiums were £36.41m (£34.31m), with new annual premiums virtually unchanged. Refuge also reported a jump from £92,000 to £287,000 in pre-tax profits from Marlborough Court Fund Managers, which manages three unit trusts.

The group made an £87,500 after-tax loss on RLI Finance, its personal loan operation.

On the non-life insurance side, premium income rose from £6.08m to £7.36m.

Two ancient sets of fortifications protect Refuge from potential predators. Some 22.5 per cent of the shares are in a Canadian life company, the hands of three old friends Refuge's fellow industrial life office, Britannic, and the Proctor-Pearson family. Also, Refuge's almost total dependence on its 1,600-strong home service agency sales force makes it an unlikely bid target, given the administrative and weight of door-to-door premium collection. So Refuge was expensive even before yesterday's 15p climb. Wood Mackenzie's mutualisation price estimates value it at perhaps 450p as a going concern. Investors at 551p are making a big act of faith in the Refuge's new ventures — personal loans, unit-linked life sales, and cricket sponsorship. On an expected £8.75m after-tax profit and 15p dividend for the full year, the gross yield, however, is an attractive 4.5. One worry is that life profits were last year only 92 per cent of dividend costs, after a decline from 108 per cent in 1981, so a deterioration in results would pose problems. Yet the Refuge has an intriguing strength: that because it has stuck to its home service roots it now has nothing to fear from the Financial Services Act.

## Bullers in loss midway

Bullers, which embarked on a programme of disposals and acquisitions during the past financial year, yesterday revealed it has run up a loss of £172,000 pre-tax for the first six months of 1987 compared with previous profits of £482,000.

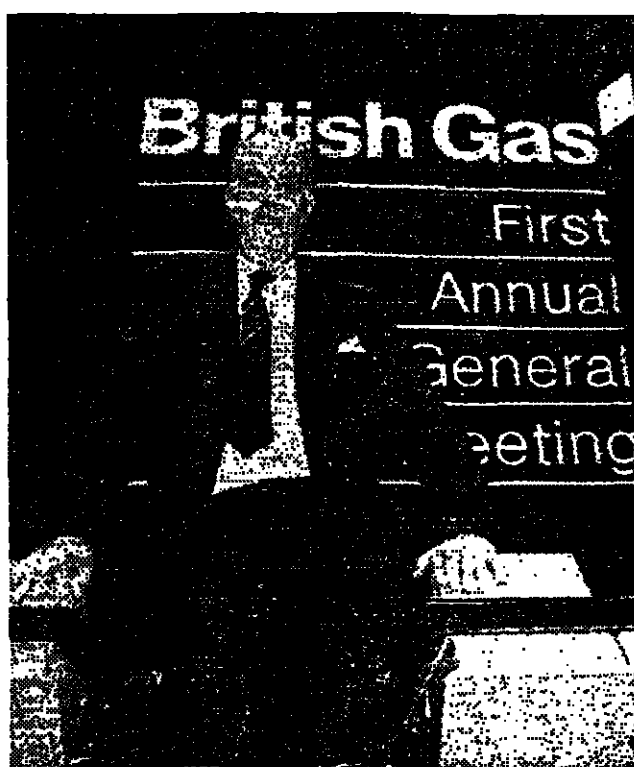
However, after taking into account an extraordinary profit of £105m on the sale of Unilever Technical Ceramics in June, and provisions for tax and dividends, the Berkshire-based group ended the half year with a retained profit of £662,000.

The directors pointed out that

disposal and acquisition programme had resulted in the group's business consisting solely of subsidiaries engaged in the manufacture and sale of high quality of consumer products.

As a result of the seasonal nature of these businesses turnover and profits would now be weighted towards the second six months.

Turnover for the first half fell to £3.97m (£4.7m). Loss per 25p share worked through at 1.57p (earnings of £3.64p). The interim dividend is being held at 0.5p net.



Gas Get-together: Sir Denis Rooke, British Gas chairman, at the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham for yesterday's first annual meeting of shareholders

## UK Land buys £52m property portfolios

UK LAND has bought three portfolios of mixed commercial property and an industrial estate for £52m.

The biggest transaction was with Slough Estates, for £25m. The other sellers were National Provident, Sun Life and Legal and General, all of which are insurance groups.

A quarter of the properties are in the London area and 72 per cent of them are in the south-east outside London, said Nelson Rakewell, the surveyors which advised UK Land.

Most of the properties have been acquired for dealing purposes. The total rent roll is worth £3.6m a year.

The acquisitions represent a major addition to the UK Land portfolios, which in September 1986 were valued at £7.3m.

UK Land paid for the acquisitions out of its own resources and with bank facilities. Its shares yesterday were unchanged at 710p.

## Keep's shares suspended as reorganisation talks begin

BY CLAY HARRIS

Keep Trust, industrial holding group with interests including motor dealerships and play ground and abattoir equipment, yesterday asked for its shares to be suspended because of discussions about a possible substantial reorganisation.

The suspension followed a sharp rise to 550p, for a market value of £37.7m.

Keep said the proposals would not involve a bid for its ordinary shares. It is also unlikely that a straight-forward acquisition is envisaged, although Keep said it expected to

emerge with additional assets. Floated as an authorised investment trust in 1980, Keep abandoned that status two years later when it won a contested takeover for Dorada Holdings, motor trader and engineer.

It subsequently took advantage of a change in legislation to buy 15 per cent of its own shares in the market, the maximum allowed, in one year without making a tender offer to shareholders.

In 1986, Keep achieved pre-tax profits of £2.71m on turnover of £77.7m.

## LET in £7m Hong Kong deal

LONDON AND EDINBURGH Trust, UK property company, is to establish a Hong Kong division with the acquisition for HK\$88m (£6.5m) of a 67.3 per cent stake in AGIFEL properties, a Hong Kong-quoted company.

LET bought the holding of 83.49m AGIFEL shares and 41.14m warrants from Arabian Gulf Investments (Far East).

It plans to retain the company's Hong Kong quote, and intends to use it as a base for expansion in the Far East.

**THE BRITISH LAND COMPANY PLC**  
(the "Issuer")  
(Incorporated with limited liability in England)

**NOTICE**

To the holders of the outstanding £33,000,000 7½ per cent. Convertible Bonds Due 26 March 2002 of the Issuer (the "Bonds") of the **EARLY REDEMPTION ON 29 SEPTEMBER 1987** of all the Bonds of the Issuer

Conversion Right Expiry Date: 21 September 1987  
Redemption Date: 29 September 1987

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN to the holders of the Bonds (the "Bondholders") that, pursuant to and in accordance with the Terms and Conditions endorsed on the Bonds (the "Conditions"), the Issuer will on 29 September 1987 (the "redemption date") redeem all of the Bonds then outstanding and not previously converted into Ordinary shares of 25p each of the Issuer. The Bonds will be redeemed at a price equal to 106 per cent. of their principal amount, together with interest accrued to such date.

Bondholders have the option to convert the principal amount of the Bonds into Ordinary shares of 25p each of the Issuer, credited as fully paid, at a conversion price of 248 pence per Ordinary share. On 25 August 1987, the middle market quotation of the Ordinary shares of the Issuer, as derived from the Stock Exchange Daily Official List, was 336 pence per share. As provided in the Conditions, any Bondholder who wishes to exercise his right to convert must complete, sign and lodge, together with all unattached Coupons, a Notice of Conversion with either the Principal Paying and Conversion Agent or any of the Paying and Conversion Agents, as set out below, at any time up to the close of business on 21 September 1987, when the conversion rights attaching to the Bonds will terminate.

On redemption, payments of principal and accrued interest will be made, in accordance with the Conditions of the Bonds, against surrender of the Bonds and Coupons at the specified office of any of the Paying Agents listed below. Each Bond should be presented for redemption together with all unattached Coupons, and the amount of any such unattached Coupons will be deducted from the sum due for payment on the redemption date. The attention of Bondholders is drawn to the Conditions and, in particular, to the Conditions which contain further details regarding redemption and conversion.

**PRINCIPAL PAYING AND CONVERSION AGENT**  
The Chase Manhattan Bank, N.A.  
Woolgate House  
Coleman Street  
London EC2P 2HD

**PAYING AND CONVERSION AGENTS**  
Banque Bruxelles Lambert S.A.  
24 Avenue de la Woluwe  
B-1050 Brussels  
28 August 1987

Chase Manhattan Bank  
Suisse  
63 Rue de Rhodé  
CH-1204 Geneva

**GAZ DE FRANCE**  
13% ECU Bonds 1982/1989

On August 14, 1987 Bonds for the amount of ECU 24,751,000 have been drawn for redemption in the presence of a Notary Public. The Bonds will be redeemable coupon no. 6 and following attached on and after September 30, 1987.

The numbers of the drawn Bonds are as follows:

11272 to 11802 incl.	11805 to 12670 incl.	12473 to 12498 incl.
12694 to 12812 incl.	12815 to 12981 incl.	12984 to 13102 incl.
13111 to 13122 incl.	13134 to 13154 incl.	13175 to 13222 incl.
13239 to 13249 incl.	13252 to 13306 incl.	13310 to 13464 incl.
13480 to 13595 incl.	13607 to 13652 incl.	13655 to 13793 incl.
13795 to 14022 incl.	14025 to 14168 incl.	

Amount purchased in the market: ECU 150,000  
Amount outstanding: ECU 74,822,000

Luxembourg, August 28, 1987

THE FISCAL  
S. A. L.

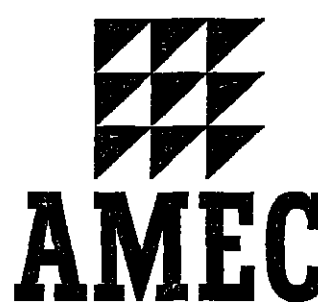
# INDIVIDUALLY STRONG

AMEC Construction Services Limited  
AMEC Industrial and Urban Regeneration Limited  
AMEC International Construction Limited  
AMEC Projects Limited  
AMEC Properties Limited  
AUST-AMEC Pty. Limited  
CV Buchan (Concrete) Limited  
Denco Limited

Fairclough Building Limited  
Fairclough Civil Engineering Limited  
Fairclough Engineering Limited  
Fairclough Homes Limited (30%)  
Fairclough-Parkinson Mining Limited  
Fairclough Scotland Limited  
The Fisk Group Inc  
Metal and Pipeline Endurance Limited

Press Construction Limited  
Press Offshore Limited  
James Scott Mechanical and Electrical Services Limited  
Robert Watson & Co. (Construction Engineers) Limited  
Robert Watson & Co. (Steelwork) Limited  
Wentworth Club Limited  
Worley Santa Fe Limited (51%)

# STRONGER TOGETHER



**NOTICE OF REDEMPTION AND TERMINATION OF CONVERSION RIGHTS**

**The Nippon Kangyo Kakumaru Securities Co., Ltd.**

**U.S. \$50,000,000**

**3 per cent. Convertible Bonds due 2000 (the "Bonds")**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, in accordance with Condition 6. (Redemption and Purchase), Paragraph (B), 4th paragraph of the Terms and Conditions of the Bonds, The Nippon Kangyo Kakumaru Securities Co., Ltd. (the "Company") will redeem on September 30, 1987 (the "Redemption Date") all of its outstanding Bonds at the redemption of 100 per cent. of the principal amount thereof together with accrued interest to the Redemption Date.

The payment of the redemption price and accrued interest will be made on and after the Redemption Date upon presentation and surrender of the Bonds (together with all coupons appertaining thereto maturing after the Redemption Date), at the specified office of any one of the Paying Agents listed thereon.

On and after the Redemption Date, interest on the Bonds will cease to accrue.

The Bonds may continue to be converted into shares of Common Stock of the Company at the conversion price of Yen 760.40 per share of Common Stock. SUCH CONVERSION RIGHTS WILL TERMINATE AS TO ALL BONDS AT THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS ON THE REDEMPTION DATE.

**The Nippon Kangyo Kakumaru Securities Co., Ltd.**  
By: The Fuji Bank and Trust Company as Principal Paying Agent

Dated: August 28, 1987

Many of the companies operating within the AMEC Group will doubtless be familiar to you in their own right. Indeed, not a few are clear leaders in their specific markets. All are individually important.

But it's together, as a coherent and complementary force, dedicated singlemindedly to the construction and engineering industry, that the AMEC Group is even more formidable.

Already, we offer a broad capability, with the facility to provide clients with either the

specialist skills of individual subsidiaries, or an integrated combination of disciplines.

In all sectors, both nationally and internationally, we are continually moving forward across the whole spectrum of construction, engineering, housing, property development, building products and services.

Individually, or together, we're a force to be reckoned with.

**The sum of the parts**

AMEC p.l.c., 14 South Audley Street, London W1Y 8DP. Telephone: 01-499 3656







## UK COMPANY NEWS

Richard Tomkins looks at the remarkable turnaround in the fortunes of Alba

## Making the most of new confidence

ONE OF the oldest names in UK consumer electronics is set to mark its resurgence from near-oblivion with a flotation on the stock market next month.

Alba, an audio and television company founded some 70 years ago, is coming to the market through a placing sponsored by stockbrokers Alexander Leung & Crutchfield which will value it at about \$40m.

The company supplies a wide range of audio, television and video products both under its own brand names—Alba and Harward—and under customers' own labels. It is at the budget end of the market, supplying the big mail order companies and high street retailers such as Dixons, Comet, Woolworth and Currys.

Alba's roots go back to 1917 when it made its first wind-up gramophone. In later years its range of radiograms, record players and television sets made it a household name across the country.

By the 1970s, however, as imports of consumer electronic goods began to flood into Britain from the Far East, Alba found itself floundering in the competitive onslaught. By 1982 it was in the hands of the receivers, and the Alba name looked as though it was going to pass into history.

Salvation came in the shape of Harward International, a trading company the main business of which was importing consumer electronic products and giftware from the Far East. Its chairman, Mr John Harris, was attracted to Alba because it would give him group two valuable new facets: its own UK manufacturing capacity, and an established brand name. In August 1982, he bought Alba out.

The group now being floated on the stock market consists of both the original Alba and Mr Harris's import business. A new holding company has been formed under the Alba name with three subsidiaries: Alba Radio; Harward International; and the Hong Kong-based Harward Maritime, which is the group's Far East agent.

The Alba of today is a very different company from the one which went into receivership. The old product ranges, which Mr Harris says were not sufficiently price competitive or innovative, were completely redesigned, were completely redesigned with Harward gave Alba access to a wide range of overseas suppliers which could compete with Alba's own factory on price and efficiency, but only about 20 per cent of the company's products are now sourced in the UK, though the proportion is rising.

Products now selling under the Alba name include hi-fi systems selling in the price range of £70 to £400, video cassette recorders and small-screen televisions selling for £50 to £200, and a wide range

of radios, cassette recorders, personal stereos and clock radios selling for under £100. The Harward name has been retained mainly for a range of car radios and cassette players, but it is also used for some of the ranges of giftware products which the group continues to source either in the UK or Hong Kong.

The merger of Harward with a company then in the hands of the receivers was not without its costs. The prospectus for Alba's flotation will show three years of pre-tax losses, reaching

£1m in the year to June 1985, as the new management fought to re-establish Alba in the market-place. In 1986, however, the group turned in pre-tax profits of £1.5m and in the year to June 1987 the figure rose to more than £3.5m.

Mr Harris, now group chairman and managing director, does not consider that this turnaround is attributable simply to the consumer boom.

"I attribute it to getting the range, the pricing, and the features correct," he says. "We also had to acquire the



Mr John Harris, executive chairman and managing director of Alba

confidence of our customers who had seen the company go into decline, and in some cases failing to deliver towards the end. They had to develop new confidence in us, and we are now getting the full value of that."

Another growth area is the export business to Europe, which is proving particularly buoyant and now accounts for about 22 per cent of sales. The importance which Alba attaches to styling is reflected in the way it adapts its products to suit the particular tastes of individual countries. Getting the cosmetics, as well as the electronics right is essential to a product's success, he says.

Although an element of gimmickry seems to be a feature of many of Alba's products—grab-equalisers, two-cartridge decks with high-speed dubbing, and large numbers of knobs and dials are much to the fore—the company regards quality as an important element of its recent successes and recoils against suggestions that it is at the bottom end of the market.

Its main competitors, he says, are Bush, Amstrad, Philips, Sanyo and Sharp—all respected names in the high street. There may be more expensive brands on the market but Alba is not ashamed of its 'populist' approach: "If JVC is a Jaguar then we are a Ford Escort," it offers in an attempt to give perspective.

Alba's sales in the year to June 1985, as the new management fought to re-establish Alba in the market-place. In 1986, however, the group turned in pre-tax profits of £1.5m and in the year to June 1987 the figure rose to more than £3.5m.

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## All sides help Dunton to double profits

Despite disappointing profits from its associate, the pre-tax result at Dunton Group, USM-quoted property developer, brick manufacturer and civil engineering contractor, more than doubled in the year ended May 31.

On turnover ahead from a restated £1m to £2.12m, taxable profits jumped from £201,853 to £489,153, with interest income in all areas, Mr Alan K. Rose, chairman, looking ahead, said that overall prospects across the group encouraged him to anticipate another good year.

The directors are recommending an increase in the total dividend to 0.5p (0.4p) with a 0.3p (0.24p) final. Earnings per share rose from 0.82p to 1.64p basic, and from 0.73p to 1.55p fully diluted.

Profits of the associate, Harman (Chesham), at £195,000, were well below the forecast made by Harman at the time. Dunton took its 30 per cent stake.

## Combined Lease hits £1.5m

Combined Lease Finance, subject of an offer for sale in April 1986, yesterday reported a £445,000 increase to £1.5m in pre-tax profits for the half year to June 30 1987.

The directors said business had continued to be buoyant during the first half and profit margins and turnover had been maintained. The financing of business cars continued to represent the major

area of growth and accounted for about 60 per cent of the group's new business.

This area of new business provided a favourable and fast cash flow but was not as efficient as longer term equipment leases. During the second half the board would give consideration to other leasing opportunities that were available so that any liability to tax

that would otherwise arise could be deferred.

Group turnover in the first six months rose 49 per cent to £17.53m. Tax, which relates to advance corporation tax attributable to the dividend declared, amounted to £41,000 (£35,000). Stated earnings per share were 7.79p (6.44p).

The company has already announced an increased interim dividend of 0.58p (0.45p).

## Alida held to 16% profit rise

A 16 per cent increase in mid-year pre-tax profit was recorded by Alida Holdings, the packaging group, on turnover up by 25 per cent.

Mr Rex Stone, chairman, said the polythene film division had achieved volume growth but margins had been reduced because of the frequent increases in raw material costs.

The increases, he said, had not been fully recovered in

selling prices.

In merchandising and distribution profits rose by nearly 30 per cent with a major improvement in the polymer distribution companies.

Turnover for the first six months of 1987 came to £22.48m (£18m) and the profit to £2m (£1.74m). Earnings were 11.7p (9.1p) and the company dividend is lifted to 2.5p (2.25p).

The chairman viewed the future with confidence as the

group entered its traditional busy second half. Demand for all products had increased rapidly and more success was achieved in lifting selling prices to counter the still increasing raw material cost.

Availability of raw material for making polythene film was becoming tight and it was not expected that raw material costs would fall as in the second half of last year, the chairman warned.

## Catalyst on way to good year figures

In the first half of 1987, Catalyst Communications Group, engaged in marketing and media services and quoted on the Third Market, made a pre-tax profit of £202,000 on turnover of £4.14m.

The outlook for the second half was excellent, said the directors.

In the previous interim period—the nine months to end-June 1986—turnover was £2.76m and profit £131,000.

Norsk Data success

Norsk Data, the Norwegian mini-computer manufacturer, has finally declared its bid for the Norwegian company control of Norsk Data.

Acceptances received under the offer currently total 69.4 per cent of the equity, which—added to Norsk's stake—gives the Norwegian company control of 80.5 per cent. The cash terms and share alternative remain open until further notice.

## Hoechst

Aktiengesellschaft

## Report on the 1st half-year 1987

## Steadying of exchange rates and prices

Business development at Hoechst continued during the 2nd quarter 1987 to be influenced by the low exchange rate of the dollar and sustained pressure on prices due to growing competition. The situation has, however, stabilised by comparison with the previous year. At the same time, raw material prices have stabilised following the marked rise at the beginning of the year.

Under the provisions of the new German accounting legislation, Group sales in the 1st half-year amount to DM 17.92 billion and are thus 4.7 per cent above the previous year's level. In the Federal Republic of Germany, sales declined by 3.6 per cent to DM 4.58 billion.

Higher sales volume, continuation of good earnings situation in the Group

Sales abroad increased by 7.9 per cent to DM 13.34 billion. This figure includes sales of the former Celanese Corporation for March to June amounting to DM 1.80 billion. Without the inclusion of Celanese, sales abroad would have declined by 6.7 per cent and sales of the Group as a whole by 5.8 per cent. The reduction in sales is due in particular to a markedly lower exchange rate compared with the previous year, especially in relation to the US dollar and the pound sterling.

Volume of goods sold rose by 3 per cent. The increase was achieved abroad. This applies above all to western Europe and the USA and to the plastic film, plastics and waxes and paints and synthetic resins divisions.

Group profit before taxes on income rose from DM 1,469 million to DM 1,482 million. Positive factors were above all the inclusion of Celanese and the general improvement in business in the USA. Profits in Latin America and in the Netherlands were below the previous year's level. Profit of Hoechst AG and of the German joint ventures, in which we have a 50 per cent share, also declined.

Earnings of Hoechst AG at high level, in spite of slight decline

Sales of Hoechst AG fell by DM 541 million to DM 6.82 billion, a drop of 7.4 per cent over the previous year. In the Federal Republic of Germany, this decline is mainly price-related. The unfavourable rates of exchange are the chief factor affecting business abroad. In addition, it was necessary to reduce prices. Sales volume in the Federal Republic of Germany showed a slight decline, abroad it was 2 per cent higher than in the previous year.

In Hoechst AG, as in the Group, business in plastic film, plastics and waxes, as well as in paints and synthetic resins, showed an encouraging trend.

The different worldwide situation in the agricultural sector has adversely affected our business in plant protection agents. Pharmaceuticals business is especially influenced by the unfavourable rates of exchange.

Capacity utilization was on the whole good. Inventories are below the level at the beginning of the year. Profit before taxes on income in Hoechst AG fell by 4.7 per cent to DM 744 million. The decline in operating profit was to some extent offset by a reduction in non-operating expenses.

Sales development in July was encouraging, the order position has continued to improve. For the second half of the year, too, we expect a continuation of the favourable business situation, particularly in western Europe and the USA. At the same time, there has been a noticeable stabilization of movements in the exchange rates. These two developments should help us to again achieve a good level of sales and income for the year as a whole.

## Report on the 1st half-year 1986 (unaudited)

Sales (DM million)	1st half-year 1987	1st half-year 1986	Changes absolute	in %
Total	17,920	17,115	+805	+4.7
Federal Republic of Germany	4,580	4,750	-170	-3.6
Abroad	13,340	12,365	+975	+7.9
Profit before taxes	1,482	1,469	+13	+0.9
DM million in % of sales	8.3%	8.6%		

Sales (DM million)	1st half-year 1987	1st half-year 1986	Changes absolute	in %
Total	6,819	7,360	-541	-7.4
Federal Republic of Germany	3,100	3,353	-253	-7.5
Abroad	3,719	4,007	-287	-7.2
Export percentage	54.5%	54.7%		
Profit before taxes	744	781	-37	-4.7
DM million in % of sales	10.9%	10.6%		
Employees	2,090	2,001	+89	+4.4
Personnel expenses (DM million) (excluding pension funds)	61,074	61,141	-67	-0.1
Number of employees on 30.06	61,074	61,141	-67	-0.1

Frankfurt am Main, August 1987

## U.S. \$500,000,000 CITICORP

Subordinated Floating Rate Notes Due January 30, 1998

Notice is hereby given that the Rate of Interest has been fixed at 6.8875% and that the interest payable on the relevant Interest Payment Date September 30, 1987, against Coupon No. 20 in respect of US\$10,000 nominal of the Notes will be US\$63.14.

August 28, 1987, London  
By Citibank, N.A. (CSD Dept.), Agent Bank

## U.S. \$500,000,000 CITICORP

Subordinated Floating Rate Notes Due October 25, 2005

Notice is hereby given that the Rate of Interest has been fixed at 6.9125% and that the interest payable on the relevant Interest Payment Date September 30, 1987, against Coupon No. 23 in respect of US\$10,000 nominal of the Notes will be US\$63.37.

August 28, 1987, London  
By Citibank, N.A. (CSD Dept.), Agent Bank

## U.S. \$500,000,000 CITICORP

Subordinated Floating Rate Notes Due November 27, 2005

Notice is hereby given that the Rate of Interest has been fixed at 6.9125% and that the interest payable on the relevant Interest Payment Date September 30, 1987, against Coupon No. 22 in respect of US\$10,000 nominal of the Notes will be US\$63.36 in respect of the Original Notes and US\$64.17 in respect of the Enhancement Notes.

August 28, 1987, London  
By Citibank, N.A. (CSD Dept.), Agent Bank

## The Kingdom of Denmark U.S. \$200,000,000

Floating Rate Notes due August 1999

Notice is hereby given that the interest payable on the Interest Payment Date, August 28, 1987, for the period February 27, 1987 to August 28, 1987, against Coupon No. 16 in respect of U.S.\$10,000 nominal of the Notes will be U.S.\$60.42.

August 28, 1987, London  
By Citibank, N.A. (CSD Dept.), Agent Bank

## Bank of Tokyo (Curaçao) Holding N.V.

GUARANTEED FLOATING RATE NOTES DUE 1997

Payment of the principal of, and interest on, the Notes is unconditionally and irrevocably guaranteed by The Bank of Tokyo, Ltd. (Kabushiki Kaisha Tokyo Bank)

In accordance with the provisions of the Agent Bank Agreement between Bank of Tokyo (Curaçao) Holding N.V., The Bank of Tokyo, Ltd., and Citibank, N.A. dated November 27, 1985, notice is hereby given that the Rate of Interest has been fixed at 7.20% p.a. and that the interest payable on the relevant Interest Payment Date, November 30, 1987, against Coupon No. 8 will be U.S.\$189.00.

August 28, 1987, London  
By Citibank, N.A. (CSD Dept.), Agent Bank

## AIRLEASE INTERNATIONAL FINANCE LIMITED

US\$30,000,000 8 3/4% GUARANTEED BONDS 1988

Notice is hereby given that, in accordance with the Conditions of the Bonds, 3,000 Bonds each of \$1,000 principal amount have been drawn for repayment at their principal amount on the 1st October 1987 in full settlement of the instalment of the sinking fund due 1st October 1987. From that date, interest on the Bonds so drawn will cease to accrue; their definitive numbers are as follows:—

472	584	691	893	1012	1106	1246	1401	1539	1637	1724	2415	3033	3618	4222	4748	5207	5734	6243	6782	7175	7606	8027	8599	9039	9629	10203	10744	11284	11896	12217	16180	23671	23786	26389	26544
473	585	692	894	1013	1108	1247	1402	1540	1638	1725	2416	3034	3619	4226	4749	5208	5735	6243	6783	7177	7610	8029	8600	9040	9630	10204	10745	11285	11897	12218	16181	23672	23787	26390	26545
474	586	693	895	1014	1109	1248	1403	1541	1639	1726	2417	3035	3620	4227	4750	5209	5736	6244	6784	7178	7611	8030	8601	9041	9631	10205	10746	11286	11898	12219	16182	23673	23788	26391	26546
475	587	694	896	1015	1110	1250	1404	1542	1640	1728	2418	3091	3624	4232	4770	5210	5788	6248	6794	7199	7627	8211	8603	9057	9633	10205	10748	11287	11898	12218	16183	23674	23789	26392	26547
476	588	696	897	1016	1111	1251	1405	1543	1641	1729	2419	3093	3623	4230	4772	5215	5790	6256	6799	7203	7630	8213	8608	9058	9634	10206	10749	11289	11899	12219	16184	23675	23790	26393	26548
477	589	697	898	1017	1112	1252	1406	1544	1642	1730	2420	3094	3622	4229	4773	5216	5791	6257	6800	7204	7631	8214	8609	9059	9635	10207	10750	11290	11900	12220	16185	23676	23791	26394	26549
478	593	698	899	1018	1113	1253	1407	1545	1643	1741	2424	3112	3634	4267	4774	5225	5793	6261	6811	7205	7632	8215	8606	9060	9636	10208	10751	11291	11901	12219	16186	23677	23792	26395	26550
479	594	699	900	1019	1114	1254	1408	1546	1644	1742	2442	3116	3635	4266	4778	5234	5794	6267	6817	7242	7633	8217	8602	9067	9637	10209	10752	11292	11902	12219	16186	23700	23793	26396	26551
480	595	700	901	1020	1115	1255	1409	1547	1645	1743	2443	3117	3636	4265	4779	5235	5795	6268	6818	7243	7634	8218	8603	9068	9638	10210	10753	11293	11903	12220	16187	23678	23794	26397	26552
481	596	708	903	1021	1116	1256	1410	1548	1647	1744	2468	3118	3682	4278	4788	5239	5801	6291	6821	7246	7635	8222	8605	9069	9639	10211	10754	11294	11904	12221	16188	23679	23795	26398	26553
482	597	709	904	1022	1117	1257	1411	1549	1648	1745	2469	3119	3683	4277	4789	5240	5802	6292	6822	7247	7636	8223	8606	9070	9640	10212	10755	11295	11905	12222	16189	23680	23796	26399	26554
483	598	710	905	1023	1118	1258	1412	1550	1649	1746	2492	3120	3684	4276	4790	5241	5803	6293	6823	7248	7637	8224	8607	9071	9641	10213	10756	11296	11906	12223	16190	23681	23797	26400	26555
484	599	718	906	1024	1119	1259	1413	1551	1650	1747	2533	3130	3697	4305	4805	5246	5806	6312	6824	7249	7638	8226	8608	9072	9642	10214	10757	11297	11907	12224	16191	23682	23798	26401	26556
485	600	725	907	1025	1120	1260	1414	1552	1651	1748	2534	3131	3698	4304	4806	5247	5807	6313	6825	7250	7639	8227	8609	9073	9643	10215	10758	11298	11908	12225	16192	23683	23799	26402	26557
486	601	726	908	1026	1121	1261	1415	1553	1652	1749	2543	3139	3710	4256	4813	5248	5813	6317	6827	7257	7642	8229	8610	9074	9644	10216	10759	11299	11909	12226	16193	23684	23800	26403	26558
487	602	727	909	1027	1122	1262	1416	1554	1653	1750	2557	3140	3751	4314	4814	5249	5814	6324	6828	7261	7644	8230	8611	9075	9645	10217	10760	11300	11910	12227	16194	23685	23801	26404	26559
488	603	728	910	1028	1123	1263	1417	1555	1654	1751	2558	3141	3752	4315	4815	5250	5815	6325	6829	7262	7645	8231	8612	9076	9646	10218	10761	11301	11911	12228	16195	23686	23802	26405	26560
489	604	729	911	1029	1124	1264	1418	1556	1655	1752	2559	3142	3753	4316	4816	5251	5816	6326	6830	7263	7646	8232	8613	9077	9647	10219	10762	11302	11912	12229	16196	23687	23803	26406	26561
490	605	730	912	1030	1125	1265	1419	1557	1656	1753	2570	3143	3754	4317	4817	5252	5817	6327	6831	7264	7647	8233	8614	9078	9648	10220	10763	11303	11913	12230	16197	23688	23804	26407	26562
491	606	731	913	1031	1126	1266	1420	1558	1657	1754	2571	3144	3755	4318	4818	5253	5818	6328	6832	7265	7648	8234	8615	9079	9649	10221	10764	11304	11914	12231	16198	23689	23805	26408	26563
492	607	732	914	1032	1127	1267	1421	1559	1658	1755	2572	3145	3756	4319	4819	5254	5819	6329	6833	7266	7649	8235	8616	9080	9650	10222	10765	11305	11915	12232	16199	23690	23806	26409	26564
493	608	733	915	1033	1128	1268	1422	1560	1659	1756	2573	3146	3757	4320	4820	5255	5820	6330	6834	7267	7650	8236	8617	9081	9651	10223	10766	11306	11916	12233	16200	23691	23807	26410	26565
494	609	734	916	1034	1129	1269	1423	1561	1660	1757	2574	3147	3758	4321	4821	5256	5821	6331	6835	7268	7651	8237	8618	9082	9652	10224	10767	11307	11917	12234	16201	23692	23808	26411	26566
495	610	735	917	1035	1130	1270	1424	1562	1661	1758	2575	3148	3759	4322	4822	5257	5822	6332	6836	7269	7652	8238	8619	9083	9653	10225	10768	11308	11918	12235	16202	23693	23809	26412	26567
496	611	736	918	1036	1131	1271	1425	1563	1662	1759	2576	3149	3760	4323	4823	5258	5823	6333	6837	7270	7653	8239	8620	9084	9654	10226	10769	11309	11919	12236	16203	23694	23810	26413	26568
497	612	737	919	1037	1132	1272	1426	1564	1663	1760	2577	3150	3761	4324	4824	5259	5824	6334	6838	7271	7654	8240	8621	9085	9655	10227	10770	11310	11920	12237	16204	23695	23811	26414	26569
498	613	738	920	1038	1133	1273	1427	1565	1664	1761	2578	3151	3762	4325	4825	5260	5825	6335	6839	7272	7655	8241	8622	9086	9656	10228	10771	11311	11921	12238	16205	23696	23812	26415	26570
499	614	739	921	1039	1134	1274	1428	1566	1665	1762	2579	3152	3763	4326	4826	5261	5826	6336	6840	7273	7656	8242	8623	9087	9657	10229	10772	11312	11922	12239	16206	23697	23813	26416	26571
500	615	740	922	1040	1135	1275	1429	1567	1666	1763	2580	3153	3764	4327	4827	5262	5827	6337	6841	7274	7657	8243	8624	9088	9658	10230	10773	11313	11923	12240	16207	23698	23814	26417	26572
501	616	741	923	1041	1136	1276	1430	1568	1667	1764	2581	3154	3765	4328	4828	5263	5828	6338	6842	7275	7658	8244	8625	9089	9659	10231	10774	11314	11924	12241	16208	23699	23815	26418	26573
502	617	742	924	1042	1137	1277	1431	1569	1668	1765	2582	3155	3766	4329	4829	5264	5829	6339	6843	7276	7659	8245	8626	9090	9660	10232	10775	11315	11925	12242	16209	23700	23816	26419	26574
503	618	743	925	1043	1138	1278	1432	1570	1669	1766	2583	3156	3767	4330	4830	5265	5830	6340	6844	7277	7660	8246	8627	9091	9661	10233	10776	11316	11926	12243	16210	23701	23817	26420	26575
504	619	744	926	1044	1139	1279	1433	1571	1670	1767	2584	3157	3768	4331	4831	5266	5831	6341	6845	7278	7661	8247	8628	9092	9662	10234	10777	11317	11927	12244	16211	23702	23818	26421	26576
505	620	745	927	1045	1140	1280	1434	1572	1671	1768	2585	3158	3769	4332	4832	5267	5832	6342	6846	7279	7662	8248	8629	9093	9663	10235	10778	11318	11928	12245	16212	23703	23819	26422	26577
506	621	746	928	1046	1141	1281	1435	1573	1672	1769	2586	3159	3770	4333	4833	5268	5833	6343	6847	7280	7663	8249	8630	9094	9664	10236	10779	11319	11929	12246	16213	23704	23820	26423	26578
507	622	747	929	1047	1142	1282	1436	1574	1673	1770	2587	3160	3771	4334	4834	5269	5834	6344	6848	7281	7664	8250	8631	9095	9665	10237	10780	11320	11930	12247	16214	23705	23821	26424	26579
508	623	748	930	1048	1143	1283	1437	1575	1674	1771	2588	3161	3772	4335	4835	5270	5835	6345	6849	7282	7665	8251	8632	9096	9666	10238	10781	11321	11931	12248	16215	23706	23822	26425	26580
509	624	749</																																	



## COMMODITIES AND AGRICULTURE

## Rotterdam energy options shelved

BY LAURA RAUN IN AMSTERDAM

PLANS FOR an energy options exchange in Rotterdam have been shelved for the moment because of too little interest from the oil industry.

The European Options Exchange, the Amsterdam-based body that is backing the project, insists that a Rotterdam market for energy options or futures still will be launched. But the start-up has been delayed twice now, with the latest launch scheduled for this week, and critics say it may be too late.

The original plans were initially to offer an options contract on gas, and then to allow for options on crude oil and other refined products. Physical delivery was to be made from supplies in the Antwerp-Rotterdam-Amsterdam (ARA) area, the world's largest agglomeration of oil refining. Rotterdam is a leading market for price-setting in the spot, or non-contract, market for crude oil and refined products.

But more recently plans were shifted to make settlement of the gas option in cash instead of physical product. Cash settlement was considered more attractive to the 50 exchange

JAPAN'S MINISTRY OF International Trade and Industry (MITI) is considering deregulating certain commodity futures markets which it oversees, including precious metals, Reuters reports from Tokyo.

Mr. Koji Miyamoto, director of MITI's Commercial Affairs Office, said plans include increasing the number of contracts which members and non-members may hold in individual markets. Current limits on maximum open positions per investor vary from market to market.

MITI is also considering allowing eligible foreign futures brokers to join futures markets under its

supervision. The plan aims to help expand domestic commodity futures markets amid the globalisation of futures trading, Mr. Miyamoto said.

MITI and the Agriculture and Finance Ministries share control over Japanese commodity futures trading. MITI regulates gold, silver, platinum, rubber, cotton yarn, spun rayon and worsted yarn futures trading.

"Controls on commodities futures should be eased, depending on the commodity. Especially among precious metals, futures activity is getting bigger and more participants are joining trading," Mr. Miyamoto said.

members who had experience on the European Options Exchange and none in oil trading. None of the 25,000 seats was bought by oil interests.

Mr. O. J. Verbeek, director of the energy options exchange, says various alternatives are being considered to include petroleum traders and savings the market. These include a move back to physical

delivery and the introduction of futures contracts, which are more familiar to traders because of the popular energy futures on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

Several obstacles remain. One is that London has gained a head start with its energy futures on the International Petroleum Exchange and the more recent introduction of energy options. Earlier

this week the IPE and the New York Mercantile Exchange announced plans to look into the possibility of linking trading.

Another problem is that the European Options Exchange already has its hands full with other big initiatives, such as the recent launch of an option on the major market index and the establishment of a separate financial futures market in Amsterdam. Still another hurdle is the delay in construction of a trading floor for a Rotterdam market which was to be housed in the new world trade centre.

Mr. Jan Oskam, the general secretary of the Oil and Coal Traders, said yesterday that traders have shunned the idea of a separate market for oil and coal futures because of lack of familiarity with options and doubts about the market's organisation. "It's not a question of whether options come first and then futures or vice versa or whether you have cash settlement or physical delivery," he observed. "You must instill confidence, convince the traders that it can be done and that means starting. You can't be a success unless you start."

## Boliden acquires Spanish mine group

BY Sara Webb in Stockholm

BOLIDEN, the Swedish mining, metals, and chemicals group, has acquired the Spanish mining company, Andaluza de Piritas, from Banco Central, one of the leading Spanish commercial banks, for an undisclosed sum.

Andaluza de Piritas gives Boliden a foothold in Spain which, according to a Boliden official, is "one of the few interesting new opportunities in Europe for us, along with Portugal."

Andaluza de Piritas, which is based in south-west Spain, has an ore dressing plant and an open pit complex in a mine which contains zinc, silver, copper, lead and pyrite.

Boliden has agreed certain concessions which would enable it to conduct further exploration in the area and said it hopes to find other new mines nearby.

The Spanish company's annual ore output is about 2m tonnes, with zinc accounting for about half of that.

It has annual sales of SKr 400m and employs a workforce of 500. Boliden believes it can run the mining company profitably. Mr. Kjell Nilsson, managing director of Boliden, said he believed that given current metal prices and the amount of mineral reserves known today, the mine could remain in operation until well into the 1990s.

## Kuwait spot crude ban

KUWAIT HAS suspended all spot crude sales worldwide until further notice, a Kuwait Petroleum Corp (KPC) spokesman said yesterday.

The ban, which came as a directive from top management in Kuwait, was effective immediately, Reuters reports. It covered sales of crude volumes surplus to contract sales commitments plus exchanges of Kuwaiti crude for other grades, the spokesman said.

He declined to comment on how much crude KPC's spot sales involve, or give a reason for the suspension.

Kuwait's July crude output was estimated at 1.3m barrels per day, above its OPEC quota of 980,000 bpd, a Reuters survey showed.

## Brazil sets castor oil minimum

BY RIK TURNER IN SAO PAULO

BRAZIL WILL begin selling stockpiled castor oil as soon as the price on the Rotterdam market reaches \$950 a tonne, according to Mr. Michael Suchorzewski, an official of the state-owned Produce Finance Company (CFFP).

That is the minimum price set for the sale of 28,577 tonnes of oil earmarked for disposal last month.

Sales will be in 2,000-tonne lots, spaced between two and four weeks apart.

The Rotterdam price has been steady at about \$915 a tonne for some time now, but Mr. Suchorzewski expects the market to become more bullish in response to a small Indian crop, forecast at no more than 100,000 tonnes of beans (of which some 120,000 tonnes will be required for the domestic

market), and reduced Brazilian production this year.

Those two countries normally supply about 90 per cent of the world market for oil.

Earlier this month the CFFP reduced its estimate of the Brazilian crop between 150,000 and 160,000 tonnes to between 110,000 and 120,000 tonnes. But its price threshold has been calculated on the basis of a still lower crop figure.

As the bean/oil yield for Brazilian seeds is 45 per cent even the current estimate would leave the country with no more than 54,000 tonnes of oil from the current crop, while domestic demand is steady at 15,000 tonnes/year.

Indeed, with the domestic market price for oil reacting to the tight supply situation, Mr

Suchorzewski did not rule out the possibility that part of the 28,577 tonnes of oil could be sold off to local industry, provided the Cruzado price matches up to the dollar threshold.

India's domestic market for castor oil meanwhile makes much greater demands on that country's production capacity, and exports there are controlled by the government, which only allows them to take place once domestic requirements have been met.

In the expectation that tight supplies will create a bullish trend in the market, Brazil is sending a clear signal to consumers that if they want to buy what little oil it has available they will have to pay a remunerative price for it.

## Third world debt plan proposed

BY JOHN MADLEY

WHEN AFRICAN Finance Ministers meet in Addis Ababa from September 7 to 11, to discuss the continent's debt crisis, they will be considering a proposal that would boost agricultural production through debt relief.

The proposal was made last month at the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in Geneva by Mr. Ibrahim Jazary, President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

Mr. Jazary suggested that industrialised countries allow

developing countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, to reimburse part of their official bilateral debts in local currencies.

These funds, he said, could then be placed into an internationally managed development fund for reinvestment in agriculture and rural development projects. They would be managed, proposed Mr. Jazary, by an external multilateral organisation such as IFAD in close consultation with governments and non-government organisations.

African countries could decide to push for the Jazary scheme and relieve some of their debt burden and release more funds for agricultural projects. Aid from donor countries for third world agriculture fell from \$9.5bn in 1984 to \$9.2bn in 1985.

Mr. Jazary believes that the proposal would give industrialised countries the chance to give concrete expression to the general ideas for overcoming the debt problem that were considered at the seven-nation summit in Venice this year.

## Canadian grain stocks up 50 per cent

BY DAVID OWEN IN TORONTO

THE RECORD Canadian wheat harvest of 1986 has swelled the stocks in the nation's grain elevators by about 50 per cent from year earlier levels, according to Statistics Canada figures.

Farm and commercial stocks of Canadian wheat were 12.9m tonnes by July 31, the agency said, compared with just 8.6m tonnes a year earlier.

Stocks of a clutch of other grains, including durum wheat, oats, and flaxseed were also well up on 1986 levels. The

steepest increases were for durum wheat, where stocks tripled to 3.62m tonnes from 1.1m in 1986, and flaxseed, where stocks nearly doubled, to 488,000 tonnes.

Stocks of maize, barley, rapeseed and soybeans declined from year-earlier levels. In most cases, however, reductions were relatively slight.

Meanwhile, the Ontario Wheat Producers Marketing Board has announced that for the first time in 14 years the province's soft white winter

wheat growers will not receive a final payment for their crop.

Under Ontario's wheat pooling system, farmers are given an initial payment when they sell their wheat to the board, followed by an additional amount if the eventual selling price exceeds what the board paid for the grain.

This year, it seems, the board received an average of \$0.110 per tonne for the wheat, a figure which barely equals its initial buying price.

## Dubai's informal gold traders

BY ANGELA DIXON

ON DUBAI'S Creek stands a large building, its glazed cladding glittering in the reflected light from the water. It is known as the Gold Building, and not only because of its colour. It was from here that in the past, merchants could peer out of the upstairs windows to keep an eye on the gold from the vaults of the building being loaded onto dhows—the traditional wooden trading ships of the Gulf.

The bulk of the gold passing through Dubai goes to India, where tradition and new wealth combine to create an increasing demand. Indian families still prefer marriage dowries to consist of solid gold, and a rising middle class—some 100m strong—has the money to pay for it. A series of good harvests in India from 1982 to 1984 also boosted gold purchases in the subcontinent.

Imports of gold come mainly from Switzerland, with some from London. Figures vary and official statistics do not tell the whole story, but up to 100 tonnes of gold can pass through Dubai in a single year. A fresh source of gold for Dubai is the raw metal prices in the new African from-line states, some of which is no longer sent to

South Africa to be refined. It is estimated that Dubai's gold turnover in a single year touches the billion-dollar mark. "Dubai's fortunes depend on the Indian market," said one banker. "Gold will continue to be a very important component of Dubai's trade."

Although India imports gold from other sources, for example Hong Kong, the US, Britain, Singapore and Canada, Dubai supplies between 70 and 80 per cent of the Indian demand.

Many banks, both foreign and local, are involved in the trade. But they buy on a consignment basis on behalf of customers—gold is not traded on their own account. Citibank handles around a quarter of Dubai's imports and the locally-based Bank of Oman has always had a slice of the market. Union Bank of the Middle East (UBME) also takes consignments, while Middle East Bank (MEEB) recently applied for a permit to do so. Additionally quite a large proportion of the trade is in the hands of traditional traders, running their own import business, on the same basis as importers of motor cars, spices or textiles.

At the airport, security is tight from the moment the gold is offloaded from the plane until it is signed for by the consignee in the presence of airline officials and airport police. Then a surprising informality often takes over, and the metal is handled with a casualness born of long familiarity.

Often a trader will send a messenger to collect boxes of gold from the airport by taxi. He will then as often as not ask the taxi to wait in the street below as he unloads the boxes and carries them upstairs one by one.

Modest offices belie the size of the turnover of some of these companies. At the top of a flight of narrow stairs, one walks straight into an unpretentious room, often overlooking a busy street full of shops selling anything from cooking pots to plastic sandals. Here, traders worth several millions of dollars are transacted daily. The trader takes a small percentage on each consignment but even, say, two per cent of a million dollars is a sizeable sum.

Dubai's gold comes mainly in the form of ten-tola bars. One of these is about the size of a lady's cigarette lighter, usually marked .999 fine and stamped with the name of a famous Zurich or London supplier.

## LONDON MARKETS

COFFEE PRICES on the London futures market continued to gain ground yesterday. But the pace of the rally, which was never a breath-taking, slowed a little. Once again spill-over speculative buying from the New York market was a leading feature as London's November position added \$8 to Wednesday's \$16 rise to reach a fresh 3-month high of \$1,335.50 a tonne. Reports of growing pressure on the Brazilian authorities to seek agreement on the resumption of International Coffee Agreement export quotas at next month's meeting of the International Coffee Organisation continued to underpin the bullish tone. In sharp contrast the December contract coffee futures position ended the day \$14 down at \$1,307.50. A tense after a burst of speculative buying and hedging sales. Sterling's firmness against the dollar also weighed down cocoa values as daily reports of rainfall in Brazilian growing areas where lack of moisture had been causing concern.

LME prices supplied by Amalgamated Metal Trading.

## INDICES

REUTERS  
Aug. 28 Aug. 29  
1800.5 1660.5 1620.0 1488.2  
(Base: September 15 1981=100)  
DOW JONES  
Aug. 28 Aug. 29  
289.12 288.14 287.50 287.50  
131.43 130.83 130.50 130.50  
(Base: December 31 1931=100)

## MAIN PRICE CHANGES

Aug. 27 - 4 or Month 1987 - ago

Aluminium  
Free Market \$1,800/282 +10 \$1,810/78  
Cash Grade A \$1,805.50 +5.50 \$1,811.00  
3 months \$1,815.50 +10.00 \$1,825.50  
Gold TRON 288.14 +0.14 288.28  
Last Cash \$243.75 +0.25 \$244.00  
\$244.75 +0.25 \$245.00  
\$245.75 +0.25 \$246.00  
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## CURRENCIES, MONEY AND CAPITAL MARKETS

25

## FOREIGN EXCHANGES

## Dollar loses ground

The DOLLAR remained depressed by disappointing trade figures but failed to break out of its recent trading range because of fears about central bank intervention. The US current account deficit for the second quarter was a record \$39.4bn and coming on top of a wider West German trade surplus in July, dollar sentiment took another bad knock.

However there was insufficient impetus to push the dollar below levels regarded as a trigger for central bank intervention. Nevertheless the dollar's underperformance remained bearish and most traders were convinced that it was due for a further decline.

The dollar closed at DM1.8130 down from DM1.8250 and ¥141.95 from ¥143.00. Elsewhere it slipped to SFR1.6380 from SFR1.6500 and FF4.0575 compared with FF4.0225. On Bank of England figures, the dollar's exchange rate index fell from 101.5 to 101.1.

Sterling's exchange rate against the dollar in 1987 is 1.6885 to 1.6710. July average 1.6806. Exchange rate index 72.3 against dollar at the end of 1986 and 72.0 on Wednesday. The six-month rate figure was 68.2.

Shilling finished the day on a firmer note, partly in reaction to its recent decline but also as a reflection of speculation that higher interest rates would be necessary to control an overheating of the economy but there was really little impetus to carry any further over the long weekend and ahead of Tuesday's UK trade figures.

## £-¥ NEW YORK

Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800

## STERLING INDEX

Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27
72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3
72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3
72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3
72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3
72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3
72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3

## CURRENCY RATES

Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
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1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800

## CURRENCY MOVEMENTS

Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800

## OTHER CURRENCIES

Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
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1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800

## MONEY MARKETS

**Nervous ahead of trade figures**

INTEREST RATES were steady on the London money market yesterday, with three-month interbank unchanged at 10.5-10.6 per cent.

There was a general mood of nervousness about Tuesday's UK trade figures, but a better performance by sterling helped sentiment and the market was quiet ahead of the long holiday weekend in Britain.

The Bank of England initially forecast a money market shortage of £250m, but revised this to £300m at noon, and to £350m in the afternoon. Total help of £315m was provided.

Before lunch the authorities bought £200m bank bills outright, by 9.15 am they had bought £1.5bn in band 4 at 9.15 per cent, £1.5bn Treasury bills in band 4 at 9.15 per cent, and £1.5bn bank bills in band 4 at 9.15 per cent.

In the afternoon another £110m bills were purchased, through £25m Treasury bills in band 4 at 9.15 per cent, and £85m bank bills in band 4 at 9.15 per cent.

Bills maturing on official bonds, repayment of rate assistance and a take-up of Treasury bills drained

## JAPANESE YEN—Trading

range against the dollar in 1987 is 159.45 to 138.35. Exchange rate index 24.3 against 200.4 six months ago.

Comments by various officials in the US and Tokyo failed to underpin the dollar in Tokyo and it eased to ¥142.35 at the close from ¥142.85 in New York and in Tokyo on Wednesday. Traders were wary of pushing the dollar much lower for fear of central bank intervention.

However, there was a general feeling that the fundamentals governing the dollar's bearish undertone were still in place and that the US unit was inevitably due for another downward correction.

There were no obvious signs of any intervention by the Bank of Japan but dealers stressed that the Bank had been active, making inquiries about rates and so bringing attention to its presence.

**NIGERIAN NAIRA:** The naira was lower at yesterday's fixing in Lagos. The US dollar rose to 4.08 naira from 3.9989 at the previous auction. All the \$100m of offer were allotted.

Changes are for £100, therefore positive change denotes a weak currency. Amount calculated by Financial Times.

## POUND SPOT—FORWARD AGAINST THE POUND

Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
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1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800

## DOLLAR SPOT—FORWARD AGAINST THE DOLLAR

Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
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1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800

## EURO-CURRENCY INTEREST RATES

Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
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1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800

## EXCHANGE CROSS RATES

Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800

## FT LONDON INTERBANK FIXING

Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800

## NEW YORK

Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800

## LONDON MONEY RATES

Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27	Aug. 27
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800
1.6800-1.6900	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800	1.6700-1.6800

## FINANCIAL FUTURES

## Gilts give up early gains

LONG-TERM gilt futures closed a little firmer, but failed to maintain opening gains, during a dull day on the London International Financial Futures Exchange.

December was the most heavily traded month, at 15,972 contracts, with September volume falling to 6,438.

December gilts opened at the day's high of 114.00, and finished at 113.24, compared with 113.30 on Wednesday.

Yesterday was the first notice day for delivery of the September contract, and dealers suggested the failure of any sellers to announce their intention to

deliver was a bearish signal. High volume of 1,100 in December put options at 112 was also regarded as a sign of growing market nervousness, ahead of next week's UK trade figures.

The strength of sterling against the dollar provided some support, but trading was restricted ahead of the long holiday weekend in the UK.

A weaker dollar and concerns about the high level of the Federal funds rate on the first day of a new statement period depressed US Treasury bonds on Wednesday. Although the Federal Reserve added funds to the New York

banking system, the high Federal funds rate of 6 1/2 per cent led to fears the US authorities are guiding interest rates up to support the dollar.

September US bonds opened at 89.05, but this was the day's high, and the contract fell to close at 88.14, against 89.14 previously.

Japanese Government bond futures traded very quietly on Wednesday, with volume mostly confined to December delivery. The December contract opened firmer at 106.40, and closed at 106.41, compared with 105.87 on Wednesday.

There was no obvious signs of any intervention by the Bank of Japan but dealers stressed that the Bank had been active, making inquiries about rates and so bringing attention to its presence.

**NIGERIAN NAIRA:** The naira was lower at yesterday's fixing in Lagos. The US dollar rose to 4.08 naira from 3.9989 at the previous auction. All the \$100m of offer were allotted.

Changes are for £100, therefore positive change denotes a weak currency. Amount calculated by Financial Times.

## POUND SPOT—FORWARD AGAINST THE POUND

June	89.23	89.34	89.33	
July	89.23	89.34	89.33	
Aug.	89.23	89.34	89.33	
Estimated Volume 3,641 (7,755)				
Previous day's open 11,717 (17,212)				

25-30 TON INDEX				
PT-5 per 100 barrel point				
	Close	High	Low	Prev.
Sept.	227.45	228.50	224.00	
Oct.	227.45	228.50	224.00	
Estimated volume 1,463 (1,917)				
Previous day's open 11,852 (5,889)				

THREE-MONTH EUROBRILL				
The grade of 100%				
	Close	High	Low	Prev.
Sept.	92.81	92.84	92.76	92.85
Oct.	92.81	92.84	92.76	92.84
Nov.	92.81	92.84	92.76	92.84
Dec.	92.81	92.84	92.76	92.84
Jan.	92.81	92.84	92.76	92.84
Feb.	92.81	92.84	92.76	92.84
Mar.	92.81	92.84	92.76	92.84
Apr.	92.81	92.84	92.76	92.84
May	92.81	92.84	92.76	92.84
Estimated volume 7,068 (33,950)				
Previous day's open 11,320 (33,977)				

U.S. TREASURY BONDS %				
100.0000 State of Illinois				
	Close	High	Low	Prev.
Sept.	88.14	89.05	88.07	89.14
Oct.	88.14	89.05	88.07	89.14
Nov.	88.14	89.05	88.07	89.14
Dec.	88.14	89.05	88.07	89.14
Jan.	88.14	89.05	88.07	89.14
Feb.	88.14	89.05	88.07	89.14
Mar.	88.14	89.05	88.07	89.14
Apr.	88.14	89.05	88.07	89.14
May	88.14	89.05	88.07	89.14
June	88.14	89.05	88.07	89.14
July	88.14	89.05	88.07	89.14
Aug.	88.14	89.05	88.07	89.14
Estimated volume 1,000 (1,000)				
Previous day's open 11,320 (33,977)				







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## LONDON SHARE SERVICE

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Continued on next page

	Gross	Net
ANZ Finance High Interest Cheq		

UNIT TRUST NOTES

	Gross	Net	Gross	Net	Gross	Net
1. <b>TRUST FUNDS</b>						
2. <b>Real Estate</b>						
3. <b>Real Estate Investment Trusts</b>						
4. <b>Real Estate Securities</b>						
5. <b>Real Estate Securities</b>						
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## REFERENCES

High	Low	Slack	Price	+w	Qty	Yr
					Mt.	
43	22	Yellow Pine Rd 20k	25			
45	22	Yellow Pine Rd 20k	25			
46	22	Yellow Pine Rd 20k	25			
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on Aut Mining 25c	106	

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Rights issue pending. <sup>1</sup> Earnings based  
and yield exclude a special payme

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quoted in Irish currency.

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**95 Property**  
**24 Oil and**

axo	280	Land Securities	23
and let	45		
US A	175	MEPC	45
Peachey	45		
ardian	90		
ON	30	Dals	32
Ben Petroleum	32		
British	105	Burmah Oil	46
erwin Aids	125	Chatterhall	6
Quar	52	Cherrier	1
edroble	40	Shell	110
sal & Gen	32	Trigonral	130
Bank	50	Ultramar	24
Inc	62		
arks & Seamer	22	Wines	6
eland Bank	35	Cos Gold	95
Wells	35	Lovrho	26
Ro T Zinc	90		

A selection of Options traded is given on the  
 London Stock Exchange Report Page.



## LONDON STOCK EXCHANGE

## Government bonds steadier in thin trading while equities remain unsupported

Account Dealing Date

First Dealings Last Account  
Aug 10 Aug 20 Aug 30  
Aug 10 Aug 20 Aug 30  
Aug 10 Aug 20 Aug 30  
Aug 10 Aug 20 Aug 30

New time dealings may take place  
from 9.00 am two business days earlier.

A steadier trend in the pound  
and in British Government bond  
prices proved no help to the UK  
equity market yesterday, and  
share prices succumbed to the  
overnight fall on Wall Street. Once  
again, turnover was very thin  
ahead of the extended weekend  
holiday in London, which will be  
followed on Tuesday by the latest  
UK trade figures.

Against the generally nervous  
background, equities traded erratically.  
After opening lower, the  
market dipped sharply, then rallied  
to plus territory before slipping  
lower again as Wall Street  
came in easier.

At the close, the FT-SE 100  
index was 3.8 down at 2245.8, with  
the FT Ordinary Index down 2.1 at  
1755.1. But it was a "nothing day"  
according to one leading trader.

The London markets remained  
unsettled by prospects for next  
week's announcement of the UK  
trade figures for July - City estimates  
range to a deficit of £300m.

The equity sector is also  
depressed by the failure of the  
latest retail issues.

Major indices benefited from  
firmness in oil shares, with softness  
in crude prices failing to  
shake renewed belief that the  
Gulf situation could yet force  
prices upwards.

But against the trend of the  
energy sector, shares in British  
Gas turned down as a seller  
appeared in London while the  
market awaited news from the  
group's first annual meeting.

Some foreign investors are  
believed to be concerned about  
pressure from UK industrial  
customers for British Gas to trim  
its prices. But Nomura, the  
Japanese house, which com-  
menced making markets in British  
Gas earlier this week, said it saw  
little business in the stock  
yesterday.

Imperial Chemical Industries  
continued to force ahead but the  
other major blue chip stocks were  
mostly a shade easier in desultory  
trading.

Shares in United Newspapers  
moved higher as the board,  
announcing a sponsored ADR  
programme, confirmed US  
interest in the shares.

Life assurance groups rallied  
from the setback which followed  
Wednesday's decision by the  
authorities to postpone introduc-  
tion of personal pension plans.

There was also activity among the  
composites with speculative  
buyers active in some issues.

French stocks moved higher in  
London, responding to non-UK  
buying which followed the firm-  
ness of the Paris market. Financial  
issues were wanted, and  
Navigation Marine stood out well  
for the second consecutive  
session.

Government bonds ended a fir-  
mer trend in sterling helped  
prices rally from early weakness,  
but traders commented that retail  
interest has died away ahead of  
Tuesday's trade figures announce-  
ment.

Gills took their lead from the  
LIFFE futures markets for most of  
the day, and a firm close in that  
sector sustained the cash Treasury  
market at the end of the ses-  
sion. Gold shares had a quiet day  
before turning off in late dealings  
as bullion prices lost ground. But  
uncertainty over the US dollar  
continued to sustain investment  
sentiment in mining shares.

Two of the leading oil indepen-  
dents - Enterprise and LASMO -  
raced higher on a mixture of  
rumours of a major bear  
squeeze - shares of both fell sharply  
recently as oil prices retreated -  
firm oil prices and takeover  
possibilities.

LASMO, where mining group  
RTZ holds 29.9 per cent and will  
be free to take a bid from the end  
of this year, spurred 19 to 361p  
while Enterprise, which  
LASMO has a 25.5 per cent stake,  
jumped 13 to 306p. Turnover in  
LASMO approached the 2m share  
mark.

Royal Insurance shares spurred  
11 to 526p during late trading as  
a parcel of 1m shares changed  
hands late in the session at 526p  
a share - 8p above the market price.

Turnover in Royals, where securi-  
ties house Kleinwort, Greaveson  
have been aggressive buyers over  
the past few days, reached 7.2m  
shares.

Speculations during recent  
weeks has pointed to a "down-  
under" buyer building up a sub-  
stantial stake. Mr Robert Holme  
a Court and Mr Alan Bond have  
both been mentioned as possible  
predators. Royal said last night  
that it could not comment.

Ladbroke, which revealed good  
interim figures yesterday - profits  
were some £5m above market esti-  
mates - closed unchanged at 444p  
as a company spokesman con-  
firmed that the group is looking at  
the possibility of joining the bid-  
ding for the 80-strong Hilton Inter-  
national Hotel chain currently  
owned by Allegris of US.

The acquisition of Hilton Hotels  
is likely to cost any potential  
offer around £500m. Lufthansa,  
the West German airline, is also  
interested in the shares.

British Aerospace, a depressed  
market for some time after several  
analysts have downgraded profits  
forecasts, staged a good revival  
and closed 13 to the good at 488p.

Shearson Lehman are currently  
recommending BAE as a short-  
term buy, but the rise in the share  
price was also attributed to a  
squeeze on bear positions amid  
vague talk of Tornado aircraft  
orders.

Storehouse, Sir Terence Con-  
ran's high street retail empire,  
continued to hold centre-stage  
among Stores. The shares dipped  
1 to 304p, ahead of the September 15

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FINANCIAL TIMES STOCK INDICES											
	Aug. 27	Aug. 26	Aug. 25	Aug. 24	Aug. 23	Year	1987	Since Completion		S.E. ACTIVITY	
								High	Low	High	Low
Government Secs	84.96	84.94	85.29	85.55	85.23	87.62	93.52	84.49	127.4	49.18	
Fixed Interest	92.77	92.27	92.29	92.19	92.48	95.62	99.12	90.23	105.4	50.53	
Ordinary V	1755.1	1758.2	1768.5	1752.1	1772.2	1286.4	1926.2	1320.2	1926.2	49.4	
Gold Mines	435.6	431.2	424.2	416.5	418.8	245.1	1361.7	121.1	1261.7	26.64	
Ord. Div. Yield	3.28	3.28	3.29	3.29	3.34	4.29	4.91	4.91	4.91	4.91	
Europe (V. %)	8.05	8.04	8.01	8.07	8.19	10.28	11.61	11.61	11.61	11.61	
P/E Ratio (V. %)	15.26	15.28	15.34	15.22	15.00	11.88	14.77	14.77	14.77	14.77	
SEAG Bargains (V. %)	30.014	33.470	33.613	40.534	43.885	—	49.5	288.2	734.7	43.5	
Equity Turnover (V. %)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Equity Bargains (V. %)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Shares Traded (m)	—	403.3	391.5	557.9	591.0	297.5	—	—	—	—	
Opening	10 a.m.	11 a.m.	Noon	1 p.m.	2 p.m.	3 p.m.	4 p.m.				
Day's High	1761.2	1748.0	1748.5	1754.9	1757.0	1760.2	1750.9				
Day's Low	1746.7	1746.7	1746.7	1746.7	1746.7	1746.7	1746.7				
LONDON REPORT AND LATEST SHARE INDEX: TEL. 01-246 80725											

interim, while Prudential added  
8 at 976p. Pearl, helped by favour-  
able comments on the interim  
figures, was 6 harder at 573p.  
Refuge, after the interim, rose  
strongly to close 14 higher at 552p.  
Apart from Royals the compo-  
sition of the index was mixed.  
Exchange 9 firm at 965p ahead of  
the interim due next  
Wednesday.

Backley, the Llanelli-based  
brewer which has so far enjoyed  
the support of Whitehead's regio-  
nal "umbrella," touched 182p,  
before settling a net 4 to the good  
at 179p - 6 below the revised cash  
offer from Peter Clowes' and  
Guy Gramer's Brodian.

The increased bid, which values Back-  
ley at just over £28m, was predict-  
ably rejected by the board as  
"unreasonable."

Trading statements provided  
most of the interest in the Rising  
sector. Marley, which revealed  
profits, showed little movement  
on the figures initially, but bullish  
noises emanating from the subse-  
quent analysts' meeting saw the  
price advance to 187p prior to  
closing 3 dearer on balance at  
181p. AMEC contrasted sharply,  
falling 15 to 342p after revealing  
disappointing interim figures.

Elsewhere, Castella drifted off  
recent bid rumours faded and the  
close was 7 down at 531p. Tarmac  
continued to wilt and settled off  
at 277p, but Blue Circle held steady  
at 577p, the latter's interim results  
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CANADA

TORONTO									
Sales	Stock	High	Low	Close	Change	Sales	Stock	High	Low
Closing prices August 27									
15017	AMBA Int	91 1/4	13	13 1/4		5100	Comput In	305	300
9016	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	3600	Comstar	83	80
9017	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1000	Con Int	100	100
9018	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	9635	Constr B	445	440
9019	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9020	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9021	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9022	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9023	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9024	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9025	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9026	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9027	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9028	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9029	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9030	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9031	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9032	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9033	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9034	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9035	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9036	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9037	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9038	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9039	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9040	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9041	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9042	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9043	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9044	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9045	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9046	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9047	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9048	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9049	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9050	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9051	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9052	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9053	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9054	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9055	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9056	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9057	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9058	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9059	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9060	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9061	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9062	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9063	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9064	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9065	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9066	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9067	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9068	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9069	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9070	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9071	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9072	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9073	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9074	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9075	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9076	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9077	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9078	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9079	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9080	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9081	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9082	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9083	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9084	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9085	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9086	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9087	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9088	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9089	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9090	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9091	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9092	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9093	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9094	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9095	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9096	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9097	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9098	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9099	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9100	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9101	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9102	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9103	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9104	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9105	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9106	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9107	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9108	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9109	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9110	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9111	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9112	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9113	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9114	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9115	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9116	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9117	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9118	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9119	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9120	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9121	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9122	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9123	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9124	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9125	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9126	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9127	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9128	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9129	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9130	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9131	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9132	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9133	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9134	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9135	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9136	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9137	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9138	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9139	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9140	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9141	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9142	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
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9144	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9145	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9146	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
9147	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	7773	Constr B	445	440
9148	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	2000	Cost Gas	326	260
9149	Alcan	32 1/4	35	34 1/2	+ 1/2	1300	Cost Gas	326	260
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## NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE COMPOSITE CLOSING PRICES

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Continued on Page 3



## 35

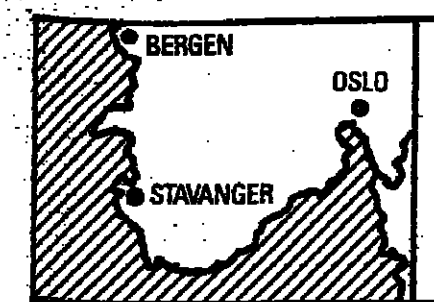
OVER-TH-COUNTER

Nasdaq national market, closing prices

**Nasdaq national market closing prices**

Stock										Stock										Stock										Stock									
Sales (thous)										Sales (thous)										Sales (thous)										Sales (thous)									
High	Low	Last	Chg	High	Low	Last	Chg	High	Low	Last	Chg	High	Low	Last	Chg	High	Low	Last	Chg	High	Low	Last	Chg	High	Low	Last	Chg	High	Low	Last	Chg	High	Low	Last	Chg				
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AEG	14	146	18	156	124	-	-	Chromec	11	118	118	118	-	FIAT 10	12	1262	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	
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Cadsky	.16
Cam38	
Canon	.10a
Canonie	
CronID	.08
CareerC	
CarlCm	.07a
Caseys	
CellCms	
OverSe	1.50
Canitor	
QtrBA	.10a
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QFIDBk	1.00
ChyCms	
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# FINANCIAL TIMES

## WORLD STOCK MARKETS

### Firmer interest rates encourage profit-taking

#### WALL STREET

RENEWED pressure on the dollar yesterday brought an upward drift in interest rates on Wall Street and an exodus for further profit-taking among blue chip stocks, writes Gordon Cramb in New York.

The Dow Jones industrial average closed 26.79 lower at 2,673.08.

Volume eased slightly to 163.81 units as advancing issues were outweighed almost two to one by the declining. The NYSE composite index, reflecting the broader trend, was off 1.68 at 185.36.

Reluctance by the federal authorities to intervene in the credit markets with any vigour began to be taken as a possible harbinger of a tougher monetary stance, as yields at the long end rose above the 9 per cent threshold.

IBM, the equity market leader which was hit hard the previous session after a batch of discouraging comments from analysts, recovered little of its poise with a 51¢ drop to \$168 1/4 as volume remained busy.

Digital added an early 5¢ after settling a patent dispute with C. Itoh, the Japanese trading house, but was then pushed 1 1/4¢ below overnight to close at \$168 1/4. Unisys eased 5¢ to \$44 1/4.

AT&T was to the fore on the active list but slipped 5¢ to \$33 1/4 on news of an order from General Electric, itself 1 1/4¢ lower at \$62 1/4.

Tobacco stocks succumbed to profit-taking after running up strongly all week, as the effects of favourable recent court rulings began to subside. RJR Nabisco was off 3 1/4¢ at \$60 1/4 and American Brands at \$58 1/4 was down 5¢.

Philip Morris relinquished \$4 1/4 to \$118 after its Americas trust, a repository for its shares, suspended acceptances from investors because of the market's current premium to the trust's own \$110 a share termination level.

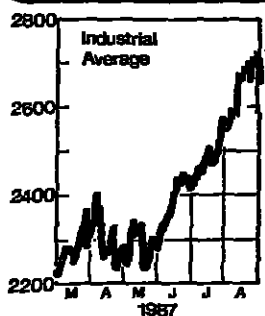
The oil sector traded calmly ahead of Opec talks scheduled in Vienna today. Atlantic Richfield did better than most with a 1 1/4¢ rise to \$94 1/4. Exxon, 5 1/4¢ firmer at \$88, launched another lawsuit against the beleaguered Texaco, which let go \$4 to \$43. Mobil picked up 1¢ to \$24 1/4 - it is to sell its headquarters lease, reportedly for \$250m.

Ashland Oil shed 5¢ to \$70 1/4, near the top of its 52-week range. It started the week strongly and subsequently received a further endorsement from Oppenheimer & Co on the back of a wider spread between crude and refined product prices.

Chrysler lost 5¢ to \$46 after announcing price cuts ranging to 16 per cent for two new Plymouth and Dodge models. Among the competition, Ford fell 3 1/4¢ to \$107 1/4 - it put a new contract proposal to the United Auto Workers - and GM at \$89 1/4 was 5 1/4¢ weaker.

Lockheed showed particular strength with a 5 1/4¢ jump to \$59 1/4.

#### DOW JONES



Rockwell moved 5¢ lower to \$74 1/4 but Raytheon improved 5¢ to \$80 1/4.

CBS continued an impressive week with a 5 1/4¢ rise to \$206 1/4 as the rival NBC network, owned by GE, found no progress in federal mediation with its striking production staff.

Polaroid showed up among the active stocks, putting on \$2 to \$36 1/4. Eastman Kodak, by contrast, fell \$2 to stand at \$100. American Home Products, a household name, was off 5¢ to \$91 1/4 after saying it would institute a share buyback programme.

The two New England banks which the previous day announced a near-\$2bn merger both held firm in over-the-counter trading. Shawmut was steady at \$50 1/4 while Hartford National, which on Wednesday was marked \$2 lower, rallied 5¢ to \$29 1/4.

Credit markets found little or no solace in a federal funds rate which returned below the 7 per cent level although only just - it traded at 6 1/4, and \$2bn in customer repurchases offered by the authorities were regarded by many operators as so inadequate that this could indicate a firming of policy.

Three-month bill yields at 6.48 per cent were just one basis point firmer, although beyond that maturity the rate rises widened to beyond seven basis points. The 6 1/2% long bond of 2017 was a sharp 1 1/4¢ lower at 97 1/4 to yield 9.11 per cent.

#### CANADA

A LOWER bond market and broad losses on Wall Street pushed shares in Toronto downwards, with most sectors posting modest declines.

On the most-active list, Placer Dome declined 3 1/4¢ to C\$37 1/4 and Alcan was down 3 1/4¢ at C\$42 1/4. Cameau gained 3 1/4¢ to C\$20 1/4.

Among active miners Echo Bay was down 3 1/4¢ to C\$34 1/4. Hecla was up 3 1/4¢ to C\$25 1/4 and Noranda declined 3 1/4¢ to C\$34 1/4.

Banks were down slightly after three of Canada's largest banks reported heavy third-quarter losses due to increases in reserves for doubtful Third World loans.

Canadian Pacific advanced 3 1/4¢ after the Government said it would introduce back-to-work legislation to end the nationwide rail strike.

Ian Rodger reports on a challenging new study

### Japan market theory contested

THE WIDELY HELD view among foreign investors that the Japanese stock market is highly overvalued is contested in a new study by S.G. Warburg Securities (Japan).

The overvaluation view is based mainly on the relatively high price-earnings ratios in Tokyo. The overall market's p/e was slightly over 10 yesterday compared with about 18 in the London market.

Partly as a result of the high p/e, foreign investors have been large net sellers of Japanese equities for the past three years. Last year, they withdrew a net ¥3,484bn (\$26.3bn).

According to the Warburg study by Mr Andrew Smithers the p/e ratio is a very inaccurate guide to values in the Tokyo market and investors should beware of making comparisons from one market to another without making adjustments for major differences in industry structures and accounting practices.

One of the peculiar characteristics of Japanese corporate ownership is the high level of cross-ownership among companies and banks. Mr Smithers' analysis of the ownership of Tokyo Stock Exchange member companies suggests that "almost exactly half the shares quoted on the TSE are beneficially owned by other quoted companies."

What this means is that most large Japanese quoted companies are also, in effect, investment trusts. "In other markets, investment trusts are generally excluded when calculating the total size of the market, in order to exclude this form of double counting," the study says. But this exclusion is impossible for Tokyo.

The problem with the p/e calculation arises from the fact that the double counting does not extend to the denominator of the ratio i.e. the earnings.

Mr Smithers believes that in almost every case the cross investments consist of holdings of less than 20 per cent of the equity of the companies concerned. Thus, the investment trust earnings, so to speak, of big companies are not included in their consolidated earnings. Only the dividends flow into the consolidated profit and loss account. And Japanese companies pay notoriously small dividends.

After adjusting for these distortions, Mr Smithers shows significant changes in the Morgan Stanley Capital International (MSCI) indices at the end of June this year. Whereas the Japanese market's p/e ratio was then 58.2, compared with the UK's 15.7 and 9.0 in the US, the adjustments would bring the Japanese figure down to 34.

He also examines the MSCI price to cash earnings ratios (which remove the distorting effects of different depreciation rates in different countries) and finds that the Japanese p/e would drop from 16 to 8.3, if the double counting was removed. That would leave it lower than the UK's 10.3 and the US's 9.0.

"The purpose of the calculations is not to seek to demonstrate that the Japanese market is cheap, but simply to point out that widely aired statements that it is fundamentally expensive do not stand up to investigation," he says.

Other more refined adjustments would have to be made to arrive at truly fair comparisons. "For example, the quality of Japanese earnings is increased by the relatively low level of inflation and the high exposure to property, but reduced by another factor, which includes capital gains realised on securities transactions," he says.

"On balance, we would expect that refinements to the analysis would increase the relative attraction of the Japanese market from the viewpoint of fundamental evaluation."

### Tokyo, Hong Kong and Sydney all break

#### TOKYO

CHEMICALS and pharmaceuticals led Tokyo to a record yesterday as investors shrugged off the downturn on Wall Street, writes Shigeo Nishitake of Jiji Press.

High technology stocks, however, came under selling pressure.

The Nikkei stock average of 225 select issues climbed 83.04 to 23,983.78, surpassing the previous high of 23,929.42 in mid-June. At one stage, the average passed the 26,000 mark for the first time when it reached 26,041.41 before dropping back later.

Turnover swelled from 989.38m shares to 1,211.09m. Advances outnumbered declines by 512 to 411, with 120 issues unchanged.

The drop in the Dow Jones industrial average on Wednesday did not deter investors from seeking chemicals, drugs and textiles. These issues are expected to report sharp profit increases in the year ending next March due to rising demand and prices. Market analysts said investors favoured stocks with lower foreign exchange risks and sold high-tech issues.

Shionogi moved to another high, adding ¥8 to ¥716 in trading of 31.44m shares, while Daiichi Petrochemical gained ¥1,380, also a record, on 10.1 of 26.68m shares. Furukawa Chemical rose ¥374 to ¥784, Sumitomo Chemical rose ¥289 and sui Petrochemical was up ¥71,160.

In textiles, Teijin closed ¥38 up ¥288 and Toray was ¥28 higher at ¥855, while Gunze soared ¥80 to ¥1,230, all records.

Pharmaceuticals gained ground on hopes of new drug announcements during pharmacological meetings scheduled to take place in autumn. Chugai Pharmaceutical

chucked up a 1 1/2% increase to peak of ¥2,110. Sanofi-Synthelabo added ¥10 to ¥1,150, while Sanyo added ¥10 to ¥1,150.

Large-capital stocks and buildings failed to be particularly active. Nissin Steel posted a 1 1/2% performance increase, but its year ending March 1987, most active list of 87, 20m shares rose to a high of ¥1,337.

Kawasaki Steel second on the active list with 16m shares, up ¥4 to ¥315. Nippon Steel and subishi Heavy Industries gained ¥4 each to ¥51 and ¥50, respectively. Tokai, however, lost ¥5 to ¥85.

Officials at major brokerages said many investors sold high-tech stocks and pharmaceuticals. But the rising volume of tech issues was a low. Even those in Hitachi's most heavily traded of these stocks amounted to only 10m shares, it declined 20 to ¥1,200.

Matsushita fell ¥80 to ¥725, down ¥90 at ¥815. The group's earnings were also strong.

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#### EUROPE

### Blue chips vacillate over dollar, economic news

#### LONDON

A DIP in the dollar affected export-led stocks on major bourses in Europe yesterday and prompted a new bout of investor wariness. However, some markets were preoccupied with domestic economic news with French shares rising on monetary indicators and Swedish stocks nervously awaiting company results.

Frankfurt saw a second day of uneven trading with an early fall, prompted by the dollar's slide, and a late recovery on bargain-hunting. The Commerzbank index lost 18.3 on generally low volume.

In cars, over the past few sessions, rebounded after large falls in the morning close up 30 pips at DM112.8. BMW lost DM7 to DM780 and VW eased DM2.50 to DM400.

Chemicals were mixed. Hoechst climbed DM2.40 to DM331.90 and BASF dipped DM1.30 to DM335.

In the bond market, the Bundesbank sold DM85.6m worth of paper after buying DM136.9m on Wednesday.

Amsterdam was depressed by the lower dollar and by disappointing results from insurance companies. The ANP-CBS fell 2.3 to 323.0 in moderate turnover.

Amev lost FI 7.60 to FI 63.20 and Aegon was down FI 3.10 to FI 98.90 after both announced lower first-half profits. The declines dampened interest in the banking and insurance sectors which led other issues downwards.

In international blue chips, Royal Dutch was the only stock to post a

gain, adding FL 1 to FI 277.5. Zurich responded nervously to the lower dollar which affected export-led sectors such as machinery and chemicals, leading the market lower.

The Credit Suisse index eased 1.8 to 583.2 in moderately active trading.

Ciba-Geigy shed SF80 to SF3,710 and other blue chips were weaker with generally small losses. Paris edged higher in active trading as foreign investors continued to trickle back. The CAC index rose 4.8 to 425.5 on renewed expectations of a cut in interest rates which helped financials.

Selected engineering and electronics issues were modestly higher but blue chips slipped as a result of late profit-taking.

Stocks ended little changed or slightly lower after a day of quiet trading. The Brussels stock index dipped 4.6 to 5,385.40 and investors

were sidelined in the absence of any economic news.

Reserve, the share of Société Générale de Belgique, was the most actively traded and ended BF10 at BF4,010. Other holdings were mixed to lower.

Madrid rose strongly in all sectors to take the general index over the 300-level for the first time. The market average ended up 6.59 at 302.45 on increased volume.

Stockholm ended lower in nervous trading prior to the announcement of Volvo's six-month results which came after the close. The Veckans Allstar all-share index lost 8.1 to 1,121.8.

Oslo rose as the price of Norway's North Sea oil climbed to over \$18 a barrel. The all-share index added 10.80 to 381.71 as bargain-hunting set in.

Milan moved sharply higher

#### SOUTH AFRICA

A RISE in the bullion price lifted Johannesburg share prices, but trading was cautious after the mineworkers' decision to continue the coal and gold mine strike.

Among gold shares, Vaal Reef rose R3 to R475, Buffelsfontein put on R1 to R79, and Driefontein added R1.50 to R83.

The rest of the mining sector steady or higher, with Impala P. num up R1.25 at R58.50, Rus-

burg steady unchanged.

The mineworkers' decision to continue the coal and gold mine strike.

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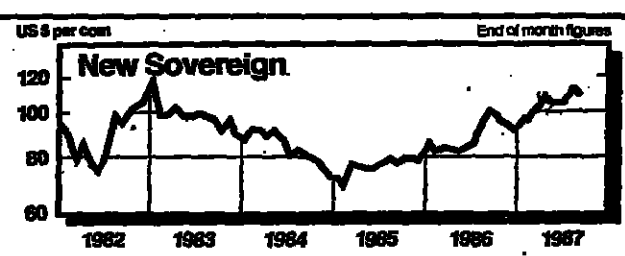
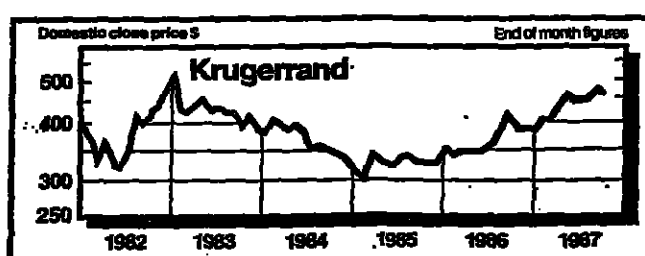
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#### KEY MARKET MONITORS



#### STOCK MARKET INDICES

NEW YORK Aug 27 Prev Year Ago  
DJ Industrials 2,673.08 2,701.85 1,504.32  
DJ Transport 1,077.96 1,084.43 781.63  
DJ Utilities 207.80 208.43 217.78  
S&P Comp. 332.62 334.57 253.30

#### LONDON FT

Ord 1,755.1 1,758.2 1,285.4  
SE 100 2,845.8 2,849.8 1,639.80  
All-share 1,143.98 1,145.30 807.36  
A 500 1,282.25 1,284.07 897.07  
Gold mines 435.6 431.2 245.1  
A Long grt 10.03 10.06 9.43  
World Act. Ind 139.45 139.42 139.07 (August 26)

#### TOKYO

Nikkei 26,983.78 26,973.74 18,503.3  
Tokyo SE 2,163.50 2,159.41 1,529.30

#### AUSTRALIA

All Ord 2,155.5 2,121.1 1,182.4  
Metals & Mins. 1,375.4 1,347.2 545.3

#### ASSTRIA

Credit Aktien 213.57 213.26 237.88

#### BELGIUM SE

5,335.40 5,339.50 3,833.48

#### CANADA

Toronto  
Mac's Mins. 3,173.1 3,207.2 2,049.00  
Composite 3,691.0 3,698.0 3,038.10  
Montreal  
Portfolio 1,961.95 1,994.35 1,823.22

#### DENMARK SE

SE n/a 218.78 197.74

#### FRANCE

CAC Gen 425.50 420.70 410.9  
Ind. Tendence 110.40 109.20 97.38

#### WEST GERMANY

FAZ-Aktien 650.57 655.21 696.51  
Commerzbank 2,000.80 2,019.10 2,104.18

#### HONG KONG

Hang Seng 3,583.38 3,586.26 1,592.58  
S&P Comp. 332.62 334.57 253.30

#### ITALY

Banca Com. 614.13 601.12 611.14

#### NETHERLANDS

ANP CBS 325.00 325.30 267.7  
Gen 271.50 274.50 236.2

#### NORWAY

Oslo SE 528.75 514.26 367.61

#### SINGAPORE

Straits Times 1,494.40 1,505.40 822.86

#### SOUTH AFRICA

Gold 2,341.0 1,697.0  
Industrials 2,208.0 1,288.0

#### SPAIN

Madrid SE 302.45 295.08 195.20

#### SWEDEN

J & P 2,294.10 2,018.70 2,408.66

#### SWITZERLAND

Swiss Bank Ind 670.80 674.00 661.7

#### CURRENCIES (London)

US DOLLAR Aug 27 Previous  
\$ 1.2150 1.2250  
DM 1.4150 1.4350  
FF 6.0275 6.1025  
Sfr 1.4950 1.5025  
Y 2.0450 2.0550  
Lira 1.1310 1.1220  
Sfr 37.70 37.55  
S 1.1070 1.1020

#### INTEREST RATES

3-month US 7 1/4%  
3-month UK 7 1/4%  
3-month FR 7 1/4%  
3-month Sfr 7 1/4%  
3-month S 7 1/4%

#### FINANCIAL FUTURES

US Treasury Bonds (CBT)  
30 Years of 10